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AMIGA FORMAT ANNUAL '94

SPECIAL ISSUE 8 ■ £3.95

YOUR INDISPENSABLE GUIDE TO THE YEAR AHEAD

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Get serious with us as we question the non-games makers worldwide about '94.

Okay, what did all that news actually mean? We see how 1993's events will affect 1994's...

What should the Amiga after the A4000 (and A5000) be like? Your questions are answered here...

AMIGA FORMAT SPECIAL

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Hello and welcome to the second ***Amiga Format Annual***. I'm Tim Smith, the editor of this packed magazine. This year we have decided to look forward to 1994 instead of doing the 'Annual Thing' and re-hashing loads of last year's info'. While you will be able to read plenty of information about what happened in the world of the Amiga in 1993, you'll also get a head start with the expert analysis of how 1994 will shape up.

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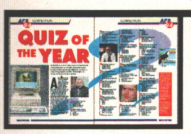

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Get the most for your Amiga! We've started, you can finish...

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AMIGA FORMAT SPECIAL

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This mag' comes to you from Future Publishing, a company founded some eight years ago. It now publishes (and sells) more computer magazines than any other publishing house in the UK.

Here at Future we hold the following tenets close to our hearts:

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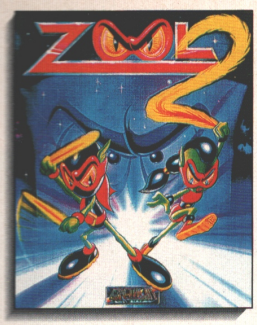
ARCADE PLATFORM



ZOOL 2

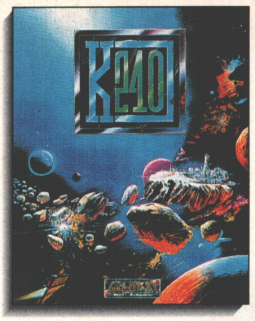
ZOOL, and his female companion **ZOOZ**, face a challenge which wilts the knees of the toughest Ninja's in this state of the art **PLATFORM ARCADE ACTION** sequel. **KROOL** and his accomplice **MENTAL BLOCK** are once again out to wipe imagination from the face of existence. Playing **ZOOL** *or* **ZOOZ** fight your way through **NINE** massive levels of hugely varied and enjoyable gameplay. Meet **ZOON**, a two headed alien dog, one head stupid, the other highly intelligent.

Features Include:

- Play either **ZOOL** or the all new **ZOOZ**, each with their own special strengths.
- A wide variety of highly intelligent enemies.
- Many varied power ups and collectibles.
- Hidden bonus rooms and secret levels.
- Sizzling sound FX and a choice of in game tunes.
- Nine huge levels.

"The classic sequel to 1992's biggest selling Amiga game".

ADVENTURE/STRATEGY



K240

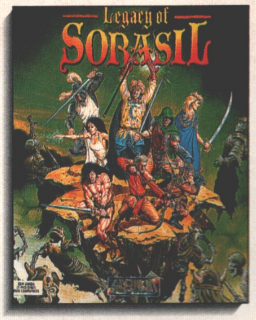
Only when you take control of **K240** in this superb **STRATEGY** game will you understand what real pressure is. The Terran Empire has expanded. Mankind and six Alien races are struggling to maintain peace in the face of dwindling resources. Is destruction inevitable.

You are the Commander of the mission to explore and exploit **K240**, but can you build a successful and peaceful colony deep in the recesses of space, or will greed and aggression bring the empire down.

Features Include:

- 6 different Alien life forms.
- 8 different types of space crafts.
- 16 different types of weapons and shields.
- Fully designable asteroid field interface.
- Highly intelligent enemy colonies.
- 40 different building structures.
- A vast range of complex interactions to understand and control.

FANTASY & ROLEPLAY



LEGACY OF SORASIL

THE LEGACY OF SORASIL is a fantastic and huge world of adventure. The fabled land of Rhia has fallen foul of a mysterious plague. Choose a party of intrepid adventurers from 8 would be Heroes and try to return the land to it's peaceful state. Battle your way through 10 vast stages against a legion of highly intelligent foes. Endless hours of solid and far reaching gameplay.

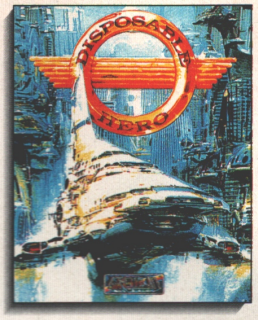
Features Include:

- 10 perilous quests to be completed.
- Stunning 3D isometric display.
- Simple point and click interface.
- 8 heroes, all with specialist skills and abilities.
- Eerie sound FX and tunes.
- Fully self mapping.

"If you want challenging gameplay and a game that's going to last you can't go far wrong with this".

CU Amiga

SHOOT 'EM UP



DISPOSABLE HERO

Get that trigger finger ready for an **ARCADE SHOOT 'EM UP** that takes up the genre where others have feared to tread. The Free Worlds lie technologically bankrupt. An Alien tyranny threatens mankind. As a certified **D-HERO** it is your task to fight your way through 6 levels of non-stop heart pumping finger sweating eyeball racing thumb busting, nerve jangling action to penetrate the alien strongholds.

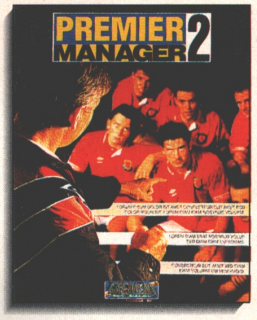
Features Include:

- Arcade quality graphics, backdrops and animation.
- Fully adjustable sound FX and in game tunes.
- Hundreds of weapon configurations.
- Mind blowing Mid-level and End-level guardians.
- Choice of assault craft with Four levels of difficulty.

"First impressions? whoah! blast, blast, boom! death, guns, more death, action and excitement!"

The One

FOOTBALL STRATEGY

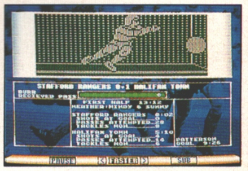


PREMIER MANAGER 2

PREMIER MANAGER transformed the face of **STRATEGY** football management games with it's accessible and enjoyable game style. It has remained in the charts since it's release late in 1992. And now, **PREMIER MANAGER 2** is ready with a whole host of added features.

Have you the management skills to turn around and improve your teams performance?

Get ready to blow the whistle on **THE** football game for 1993.



Features Include:

- 16 playing formations with 8 playing styles and 12 match tactics.
- Negotiate wages, bonuses and contracts.
- Comprehensive banking system with changeable interest rates.
- Up to 26 players per team with limit of 4 foreign.
- Set ticket prices and crowd control.
- **IMMEDIATE** sacking possible if you're not up to the job.

"This really is the best bits of all the footy games, bundled together and laid out on a golden plate for you".

The One

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ANNUAL 94

1994 THE FUTURE REVEALED

How do the recent events in the Amiga world affect what the place will look like in 1994? Amiga Format editor, Marcus Dyson, hits us with his well-informed opinion and good sense

David Pleasance has returned to Commodore UK to turn the tide.

This time last year Commodore's range consisted of the A600 (the worst conceived Amiga of all time?), the A1200 and the A4000/040. One Amiga that wasn't really worth buying, one that was, and one that wasn't really affordable even if you wanted to buy it. It's no wonder that sales slumped all over the world. Even here in the UK, traditionally the Amiga's strongest market, sales took a tumble against the consoles.

This year sees the big C with a revised, all 32-bit range. The A1200 and 4000/040 persist from last year, but both are now cheaper. The A4000/030 and CD^{32} complete the range. The new pricing structure means that the A1200 is an absolute bargain. The CD^{32} is the world's only 32-bit CD console, and both A4000's are very powerful machines, if a little overpriced when compared with equivalent PCs.

But Commodore has had massive financial problems of late, and that kind of cash crisis is difficult to recover from, even with the most consolidated of efforts.

Commodore's major backers, the Prudential Insurance Company, has stood by Commodore as it has made sweeping cuts to its organisation across the globe. But a marked improvement in financial performance will be required in the next two quarters if Commodore is to continue to exist in its current form.

It has been frank in its admissions that the CD^{32} is its last hope at financial recovery. And what a reassuring last hope it must be. It is definitely the best games console currently available in Europe. The software support is far superior to Sega's Mega CD, which only recently got it's tenth piece of software. In contrast there will be over 30 CD^{32} games available before December 25th and there are at

LAST YEAR'S RANGE

One good but unexpandable machine, one brand new machine with no software, one incredible machine with an even more incredible price tag. Commodore's range at Christmas '92 wasn't awe inspiring

94 PREDICTIONS

least another 50 in development. CD^{32} went on sale before there was any software available, and at the time of writing there were only five games in the shops. But this will change, no question about it, and as the software comes on stream, so the sales will mushroom. I mean this console is so good even I'm gonna buy one.

So it looks like Commodore will make it. Real boys-own, skin-of-its-teeth stuff it will be, but it'll live to fight another day.

However if it doesn't smarten up its advertising and marketing it may well end up right back where it started. But after this Christmas period Commodore will be able to loosen its belt a little and breathe a bit more easily. It has the most loyal user base of any computer firm, and we're all rooting for them to make it.

THE PRICE OF GAMES

As I've said, we expect to see the price of games come down over the next twelve months. Team 17 has already proved itself true to its word by releasing new products such as *Kwak* and *F17 Challenge* at £14.99. Vision Software is to release *Skidmarks* at £19.99, or cheaper to anyone who pre-registered.

You see, the thing with games at £26 is that no one is really getting ripped off, except maybe the developers themselves. It's just that the distribution network is too convoluted. Games have such short shelf lives too! An average game will only sell for around 3 months before it's a 'dead product', and it's very difficult for shops to predict exactly how many they will sell in that time. Shops have obviously got quite high overheads and they have to charge the full RRP, and order their games very carefully, just to make sure they don't wipe out all their profit with remaining stocks of unsold games.

I believe that a new breed of company will appear, that will sell its games directly, but that will market them in very similar ways to traditional software houses. So you will see previews and reviews in ***Amiga Format***, and you will see glossy colourful full page adverts for the games. But they will only be available directly from the games company themselves. There are advantages and disadvantages to this system. The upside is you pay less, and the programmers, who deserve it, get more. The downside is that you have to wait a week or so for your game to arrive through the mail. But it's worth it!

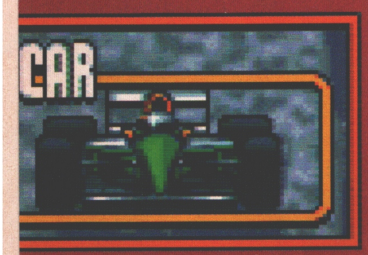
HIGHER GROUND

The Amiga is a games machine! No really, it is. The standard (A500, A600, A1200) machines have always been perceived as toys, no matter

THIS YEAR'S RANGE

This Christmas Commodore face the market with a renovated all 32 bit line up. The A1200 now has plenty of AGA software with more arriving every week. The A4000/030 offers much of what the 040 model has , but at a much lower price. And the CD^{32} is the world's best console.

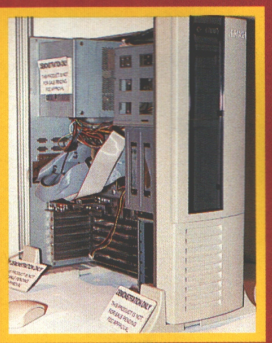
1994 THE FUTURE REVEALED



F 17 from Team 17 – a £14.99 game that isn't budget? That's right, T17 has earned itself a great deal of respect with some sensible pricing of new games.

been perceived as toys, no matter how powerful and expandable they have been. Rightly so too, as our surveys have always shown, over 95% of you play games. It's the Amiga's pre-eminence here that has protected it in the tough times. But the 'cheap' Macs and PCs have removed the Amiga's right to claim itself as the affordable serious computer. PC prices are falling, the Mac is trying to keep up, and the Amiga which was way ahead in the affordability stakes has been caught up and left behind. Despite Commodore's financial troubles, A4000s simply cost too much.

Now I'm not saying they aren't great machines, they are. And some of the software they have at their disposal is superb. But it's not enough anymore. *Caligari Broadcast*, and *Real 3D* are available for the PC. The Mac still has the best DTP and structured drawing programs in the world, and now those platforms are affordable.Still the reasonably priced serious Amiga costs well over £1,000 with 2Mb of RAM no FPU and no monitor. The really good Amiga is over £2,000. These prices are ridiculous. Commodore talks of erosion in the PC and Mac markets – Amigas are too expensive. You and I are Amiga enthusiasts, when we see an Amiga and a Mac/PC at similar prices with similar specs we will always choose the Amiga. What about the potential Amiga owner? Let's face it (bitter pill, swallow hard) the Amiga isn't taken as seriously as the Mac/PC. It doesn't have the same respect from the business world. And, sadly in the UK, it doesn't have the respect it deserves from the Video and TV industries.



A4000T. The new Amiga 4000T(ower) will be the next high-end Amiga to hit the shelves. Later next year we are to see a real power user machine, the new 64-bit RISC-based Amiga.

For Commodore to decide A4000 pricing structures in comparison to the Mac/PC is a joke, unless comparable Amigas become 20% cheaper.

94 PREDICTIONS

Sadly, our predictions for the coming year do not include massive reductions in RRP for the A4000s.

PIRACY – THERE IS NO LONGER A DEBATE!

One of the things that will bring on the death of the Amiga more certainly and more swiftly than any other factor is software piracy. If piracy continues at its current rate, games developers will completely abandon Amiga floppy for CD and cartridge formats within the next year and a half. But the tides may be turning. Since we stopped saying: "piracy is wrong" and started to explain why we believe it is dangerous for the Amiga, we've had an increasing number of letters from readers saying that they have abandoned piracy and formatted their pirated disks. Believe me, if I could, I would shake every single reader who has done this by the hand. We are not pawns of in some complex game played by the Grand Masters of the Games Industry, in fact I think that too many software house managers and not enough programmers have become rich out of this industry.

I also believe that prices should come down, and that programmers should see more of the money from their games. But for this to happen, you've got to play your part. When you see that some software houses are prepared to charge less, buy their games, don't copy them.

That Disk might not cost you much in cash terms. But it will cost the future of the Amiga – that's the whole shibang, not just games!

94 PREDICTIONS

Piracy will continue as it has always done. But I feel a change in the air. I believe we can stop piracy. Not by squealing to FAST, or calling the cops when we see someone with a copied game, but by explaining to pirates what is going to happen. Some games are expensive, and some of the big software houses have no real interest in bringing them down. But there is a new breed of softies, who care about the Amiga.

The Amiga CD³² becomes a real computer when combined with Microbotics CD³² Expansion board.

of two new top end Amigas, the A4000T and the as yet unnamed 64-bit RISC based SuperAmiga. The first machine will have obvious applications where existing A4000/040s are selling – Video, TV, Multimedia, spoilt brats with very rich parents – but it is difficult to see who Commodore expect to buy the SuperAmiga.

The plan is that it will meet and defeat Pentium-based (Intel's newest x86 chip) machines head on. The machine is expected to match Pentium machines on price, offer more power, have true 24-bit graphics, Amiga video capabilities and run PC software under Window NT. This might be the truth, but if that is the case it will not really be an Amiga. it will not be expanding existing Amiga markets, but conforming to the PC market instead.

But the obvious hope is that TV and Video companies will find it an even more alluring machine since they will be able to process the creative and commercial sides of their businesses on the same machine.

The SuperAmiga is an interesting machine, but since it is going to be priced "competitively with Pentium machines" which translates to around £5,000, it is beyond the reach of all but the richest enthusiast users. The technology it contains however (64-bit RISC processor and AAA chipset) should migrate down to home machines quite quickly.

CD³²

Commodore's second foray into the console market (anyone remember the C64GS?) is a make or break machine for the company. Fortunately for the Big C it is also a great machine. But great machines do not always triumph over poorer competition.

Commodore needs CD³² to succeed, and it needs it to succeed fast. No slow maturation period such as the Amiga 500 had. CD³² must ship in 100,000s this Christmas.

It only really has one competitor, and that is the vastly inferior Sega Mega CD. But early next year the 3DO and Atari Jaguar machines will arrive to liven up the CD console market. These machines are as yet an unknown force, but industry insiders who have seen both at work say they will fail to match the CD³² in terms of price/performance value. So Commodore should be laughing all the way to the bank as CD³²s fly off the shelves.

But there is one minor problem, a distinct lack of CD³² software. It's not because the industry has no faith in the machine, many developers see it as a godsend because it frees them from both the serious threat of piracy and the commercial stranglehold of Sega and Nintendo. It's simply because Commodore didn't invite enough people to the CD party early enough. And those it did invite were told to arrive too late. Developing quality CD games is also a lengthy process. These are the causes, but the symptoms are more easily definable. The CD³² is on the shelves, the games aren't.

This isn't the kind of cock up Commodore can afford. At the time of writing, steps are being taken to remedy the situation. So by the

BUY BUY COMMODORE?

Commodore isn't hiding its financial worries from us or the rest of the business world. And now the whole range of Amigas sport 32-bit technology, the AAA chipset is complete and waiting in the wings and Commodore has begun to develop its new 64-bit RISC based super Amiga, Commodore is in the unique position of being a company with an interesting and powerful product range who are also balancing on the razor edge of financial disaster.

It must appear to be a very tasty morsel to any of the vultures of international trade. Buying Commodore at a bargain price as its share prices languish near the bottom of the barrel would mean cash and prizes for any purchaser with the money and the muscle to market the Amiga correctly. Waiting in the wings is ACA TWT. This huge Taiwanese company makes and sells PCs the world over. It has recently acquired the rights to badge its PCs in Europe with the Commodore name. It will also market and distribute the Amiga CD³² in Asia. The only answer I can see is that it is interested in the Amiga's name, and Commodore's innovative technology.

94 PREDICTIONS

Predictions on this one are difficult, but even if Commodore the company was bought, you can be sure that the technology will survive.

My prediction is that Commodore will work hand-in-glove with ACA in 1994 but will retain its independence.

1994 THE FUTURE REVEALED

Lew Eggerbrecht is Commodore's top technical-head, and helpfully he is also capable of making a mean deal on the business front. CD³² was his baby – let's see what he can come up with next year.

THE PROBLEM WITH CHEAPER GAMES

Paying less for games seems a great idea, but there is a hidden danger to it. For seven years now Amiga games have cost between £20 and £40, with an average price of around £25. There is a real danger that the perception of the value of our machine is linked to the prevailing software price. If a grass roots movement to bring down the price of software were to succeed it may be a double edged sword.

People may see it as the death knell of the format, since the end of the eight bit formats was presaged by a dearth of full price software and a long period when only budget games were released for them. If Amiga games were suddenly to go down in price, the esteem of the machine may do too. The big software houses may drop it like a hot potato if they were to see "even" less profit.

Games such as Qwak (above) and Overdrive (below) could be as successful as Gremlin's brilliant Zool – and they could make more money foir developers if DirtectWare takes off.

94 PREDICTIONS

This need not be a problem though. A lot of today's hottest young programming talent is unsigned. A Directware house could produce great games.

And who's to say that even the established programming talent won't move over to a system that looks as if it will be able to pay them more per game than they currently get?

time you read this, it is possible that the CD³² will have more software on sale for it than the Mega CD has. But in the end, to you and me, this might not matter. The CD³² is an Amiga, and it is capable of running any software that an A1200 can. So for the legion of A500/600 owners still planning to upgrade to an AGA machine there is now a second option. The CD³² complete with Microbotics docking station.

The planned A1200 CD add-on is likely to be £200 at the very least, possibly £300. And it will prevent the host machine from receiving trapdoor RAM expansion and acceleration. The CD³² plus Microbotics docker will cost around £430 (or less given the price of certain retailers). The docking station will have a serial port, a parallel port, a floppy drive port, connectability for an IDE hard drive, and expandibility to 8Mb of RAM. It even has a parnet cable so that you can slave the CD³² to another Amiga for use as a CDROM drive. And the CD³² has a connector for an A4000 style keyboard. So for A500 owners on the upgrade path, this seems like a more logical choice than an A1200. particularly if the machine is to be used primarily for games.

Sega's Mega-CD. It costs more and does less than CD³².

As the CDTV sold more successfully to Amiga users than in the high street, so may the CD³² find its initial audience with the already converted Amiga freaks. Most of us wanted something that could blow away the console toys of our Sega and Nintendo owning friends. But since we were used to the luxuries of home computing, we didn't want to lose our processing power at the same time. The expandable CD³² is a dream come true. Go forth and purchase. But how will CD³² fare in the face of these new consoles? Or more to the point, how will these new consoles fare in the face of the fully-equipped CD³²?

The Jaguar can be forgotten before it arrives. Let's face it, Atari is so 1970s. These days it doesn't have the power or the profile that it takes to come back from the dead. Atari is embalmed and buried. The Jaguar may well be a very good machine, but it won't re-establish Atari as the household name it was at the height of the 2600's success.

3DO is likely to be very good, it is also likely to be very expensive. The basic units will probably cost in the region of £500 in the UK, early machines may be closer to £600. And 3DO is taking the same route that paid such small dividends to Commodore and Philips, that of the Home Interactive Multiplayer. We have said time and again that the HIM is an idea before its time, and we still believe that to be the case. Philips CDi and Commodore's CDTV were both complete flops. 3DO may well suffer the same fate.

Unless the manufacturers of 3DO can bring to bear an ad campaign so momentous it re-defines our cultural conceptions, they may

ROOM AT THE TOP

12 months ago, if you were to call Commodore's UK office you might have been lucky enough to talk to Kelly Sumner. More accessible and straighter talking than his predecessor, Steve Franklin, Sumner would steadfastly toe the company line when approached over any matter. I distinctly remember when I first had cause to call him. It was just after new year 1993, I had just become editor of *Amiga Format*, and several thousands of people had just received Amigas for Christmas that weren't quite working properly.

I rang Kelly to ask what had happened and what was being done about it. He explained that "a few" faulty units had escaped CBM's quality assurance department, but that it was all in hand. His unflappability in the face of a potential disaster probably worked in his favour. He was poached by US software giant Gametek to head up its European operation.

Into Kelly's shoes stepped David Pleasance who had been working in the US as a Commodore VP. David is more accessible than his predecessors. This kind of access for the users to Commodore and vice versa is of great advantage to both. You can make your feelings heard, and Commodore can tell what the public thinks.

94 PREDICTIONS

David Pleasance has been with Commodore for over 10 years. I believe he is likely to stay there. CBM's future is not assured, and the success of the CD³² in Europe is vital if the company is to survive. With Pleasance powering the management, I predict a good chance for Amiga survival.

Former CBM UK MD, Kelly Sumner: moved on to the world of games in 1993.

find their units staying on the shelves in droves.

On the other hand, if Matsushita (Panasonic/Technics to you), the worlds biggest home electrical company can't bring about cultural change... who can?

94 PREDICTIONS

My bet is that a bit more processing power, and a cheaper buy price are what it will take to make the Home Interactive Multiplayer a common sight on the old Schreiber shelf unit. And as any follower of the history of processing power will tell you, while Megs and MIPS go up, prices come down.

CD³² is the perfect stop gap until the Home Everything Machine arrives, it introduces the idea of an audio/video CD player in one unit whilst still being familiar enough as a 'console' to be easily accepted into most homes.

More than just a computer.

Here's a leading question: Why when it needs cash, is Commodore not supplying Amiga peripherals?

Its argument is that it can't manufacture and supply as cheaply as third party companies. Why not? Commodore itself states that it is one of the world's biggest consumers of Motorola 680x0 chips. So surely it gets one of the world's most competitive prices for these chips. So why can't it supply accelerators as cheaply as the competition? There is no obvious answer to this question. It's totally ridiculous that the world's biggest manufacturer of home computers can't create competitively priced peripherals.

Here is a massive opportunity for Commodore to make a bit more cash – it is looking this particular gift horse right in the mouth. Consider the approach the Big C has just taken with its PC operations. There may be a clue there as to how CBM could structure its peripheral production. It ceased production of and sales of PCs when it re-assessed its global business operations. But ACA now supplys and sells PCs under CBM badging in Europe.

There is no reason why Commodore couldn't adopt a similar strategy with the peripherals. Several companies have built lucrative businesses supplying accessories for the Amiga, and many of these companies are based in the US, where the keyboard-integral Amigas are in decline. Any one of these companies could protect its market share, and ensure continuing sales in the UK by acquiring the rights to badge its peripherals with the Commodore logo. I expect to see this happen in the coming year.

In the final analysis, the last year has been an eventful one for Commodore and the Amiga. It was packed with highs, but they were balanced by lows. It has been an excellent year for Amiga owners, the launch of the A4000/030, A1200 and CD³² have put the Amiga model range back where it belongs!

94 PREDICTIONS

Next year will be better, We will see Commodore recover, Amiga sales continue to strengthen, the CD³² become the most sought after console on the block, and the price of A500/1200 (and maybe even CD³²) software fall.

All in all, it makes us very lucky to be a part of the worldwide family of Amiga owners.

Will it? Won't it? GVP is one of the most respected names in Amigadom. Could it work with Commodore?

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THE YEAR OF LIVING LEISURELY

What Amiga games will you be buying in 1994? What did the software houses make of 1993? Find out the answers here and now

To say that the Amiga market has changed in 1993 is an understatement. It has been transformed. The CD^{32} is here. The A1200 has all but eliminated the A500 and the A600.

Both new machines represent a huge leap forward in the technology available in the home. The A1200 offers exceptional processing power and amazing graphics capabilities at a low price. CD^{32} is a make or break raid into the console market and one that deserves to work. The Amiga CD^{32} is far ahead of its rivals in specification.

The next year will be the one that really decides Commodore's fate. With this in mind we talked to the major games software publishers. Their reaction to the changes of the past year will be crucial in deciding the future. We asked them five questions each.

The first two questions we asked were about what they thought had been the best and worst moments for the Amiga in 1993. When responding to the best moments, too many of them could not resist the temptation to plug their own releases, and why not. But most of them gave enlightening answers. More revealing were their opinions on the worst moments.

The third question concerned how they saw the Amiga developing in 1994. These brought a very, very wide range of responses: some of them we found to be, well, frankly – ridiculous – and some we found to be very perceptive indeed.

We'll leave it up to you to decide which answers fall into which of these categories.

The fourth and fifth questions regarded developments for 1994. We asked them about their plans to develop for CD^{32}. And we asked them about their plans for developing for the other Amigas, so as to give you an idea of what to expect on your little vanilla wonder box in the coming year.

A confusing jigsaw of game images. But we can help you to piece together the true picture with this guide to the thoughts of the software houses. Just turn the page for the first in our alphabetical guide to the Amiga's gaming future...

THOSE CUNNING QUESTIONS

So, what was included on all those faxes and letters that we sent out to the great and the not so great over a two month period? These are the questions that we put to the software houses. We think that they cover what you need to know...

1. As far as your company is concerned, what have been the highlights for the Amiga in the past year?

2. As far as your company is concerned, what have been the worst moments for the Amiga in the past year?

3. How do you see the Amiga developing in 1994?

4. Are you developing for CD^{32}? If so what?

5. What are your Amiga projects for 1994?

Now find out the answers...

AUDIOGENIC

AUDIOGENIC is a company that specialises in sports sims such as *Graham Gooch World Class Cricket*, *Emlyn Hughes International Soccer* and *Five Nations Rugby*. Audiogenic's representative, Peter Calver, gave us the following answers.

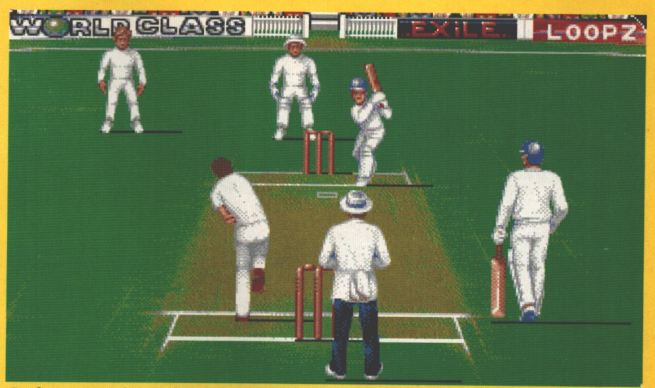
1. Our highlight was *Graham Gooch World Class Cricket* getting to No.1 in the Gallup charts and spending 17 weeks in the top 10.

2. The worst moment was when Commodore stopped producing A600s, that was daft. Although I think it will restart production of them – that's just a hunch though.

3. I hope that the Amiga will keep its strong following, although obviously this is dependant on the price staying competitive and more software coming out. I wonder whether Commodore will continue to push the A1200 or whether it will be forced to only push the CD³².

4. Yes we are developing for the CD³². *Bubble'n'Squeak*, *Exile* and *Graham Gooch Cricket* are being developed specifically for CD³². There will be A1200 versions as well.

5. In 1994 we will be producing lots more sports sims. Look out for *Rugby League Coach* and an arcade-style Rugby League game. Having developed *European Champions* for Ocean we would hope to be doing the Amiga versions of that, too.



Graham Gooch World Class Cricket – *it had the Amiga Format office buzzing for quite a while – excellent two-player action.*

QUESTIONS

1. As far as your company is concerned, what have been the highlights for the Amiga in the past year?

2. As far as your company is concerned, what have been the worst moments for the Amiga in the past year?

3. How do you see the Amiga developing in 1994?

4. Are you developing for CD³²? If so what?

5. What are your Amiga projects for 1994?

THE YEAR OF LIVING LEISURELY

BLACK LEGEND

BLACK LEGEND is one of the new independent software houses that are creating a storm on the Amiga scene. It has ten offices in different European countries, co-ordinating groups of programmers who can then work in their own environment rather than in an office. Its founder, Richard Holmes, explains his outlook.

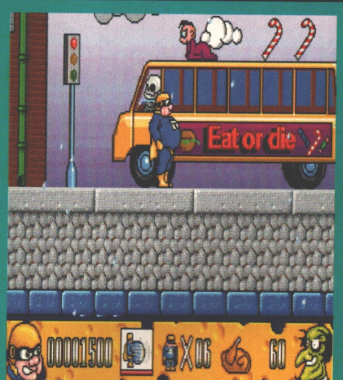
1. The continuing share of the market the Amiga gets.

2. The way the PC is catching the Amiga up as a games format. Our programmers love working on Amigas and they moan when we ask them to do PC versions. Certain stores only stock PC titles.

3. We hope it develops well. I am an Amiga enthusiast myself. 1994 decides if the Amiga goes the way of the Atari. It all depends on how CD³² gets on.

4. Yes, CD³² enhanced versions.

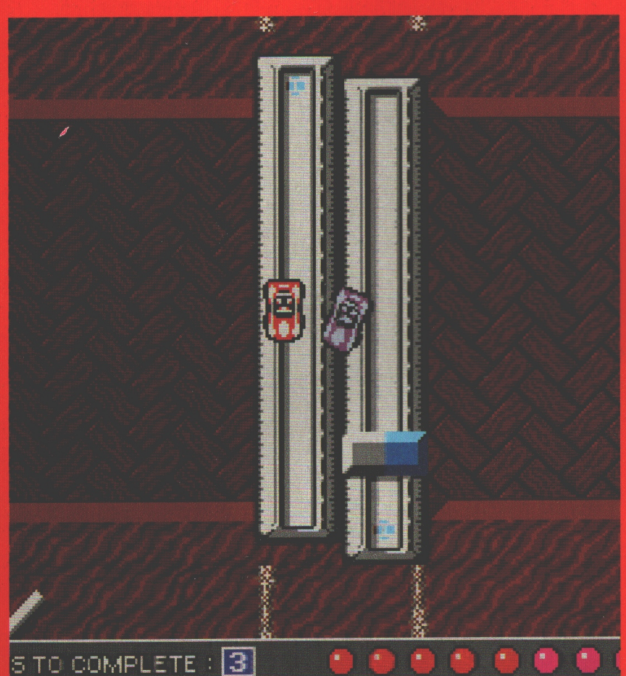
5. We have between 40 and 50 projects for the Amiga in 1994 including *Fatman II* and *Shenandoah* which is going to be an amazing shoot-em-up.



Fatman – *humour abounds in this highly playable platformer from those Black Legend boys.*

Black Legend's programmers are among the most fanatical Amiga fans we talked to, they don't even like working on other formats. As you can see Black Legend is one company that is definitely not going to abandon the Amiga in 1994.

CODE MASTERS



Micro Machines *had senior members of our office burbling with joy as if they were mere babies – it's seriously good fun.*

CODEMASTERS is famous for its *Dizzy* range of cheap and highly playable platformers that came over from the Amiga's grandfather – the C64 – , although it has recently created a storm on the Amiga with the fabulous *Micro Machines*. The company was started by David and Richard Darling as teenagers in 1986. Nowadays Codemasters employs over 50 people full-time and over 80 freelance programmers. Richard Eddy is its media marketing manager.

1. The highlight for the Amiga in 1993 has to be that it's still there. In the face of very tough competition from the console sector the Amiga remained a relatively strong format. In fact, we're so happy with its situation that Codemasters' three top Mega Drive titles - *Micro Machines*, *Fantastic Dizzy* and *Cosmic Spacehead* - will all be available for Amiga players.

2. Worst moments - the disgustingly horrible continuation of piracy. Y'know why not come round to our programmers' houses and steal their bloody furniture too?

3. With the vast interest in console games many players want to get into programming - Codemasters receives thousands of letters asking how to get started. Maybe the Amiga can ride on that interest and enable players to get into coding or graphic design.

4. CD^{32}? For the time being - no. We're looking at the best way to use CD as a medium - looking for the right game rather than the right machine. Once we have that game it may appear on the CD^{32}. It's a wait-and-see situation.

5. Our major projects for 1994 are *Fantastic Dizzy*, *Cosmic Spacehead*, *Dino Riders* and *World League Soccer*.

Codemasters is another company that has grown with the Amiga and is fully behind it. We can expect to see expand its list of Amiga projects as the CD^{32} takes off. The more games that followthe good example of *Micromachines* the better.

DAZE

DAZE MARKETING specialises in distributing games such as *Ishar*, *Storm Master* and *The Patrician* that are developed in other countries . Cliff Guy is its PR and Marketing Manager which goes a long way to explain his answers! You might remember that a demo version of *Stardust* was on the *Amiga Format* 49 Coverdisk.

1. As far as Daze is concerned, the highlight of 1993 for the Amiga has to be the launch of *Stardust*, this October.

2. The darkest moment for the Amiga this year was when it looked like the release of *Stardust* was going to slip into 1994.

3. We see sales of the Amiga sharply increasing in 1994, as more and more people hear about *Stardust*, realise how good a game can be on this system, and want to play it!

4. Bloodhouse are at this moment developing a CD^{32} version of *Stardust*, which is sure to help consolidate CD^{32} in the market place.

5. Projects for 1994 include not only the CD^{32} but also an A1200 version of *Stardust*.

Daze is obviously content with the Amiga situation and planning to do good things with it.

Stardust – great colours, great action, potentially a great game.

THE YEAR OF LIVING LEISURELY

ELECTRONIC ARTS

ELECTRONIC ARTS is one of the best established and most famous of the software houses. It is rightly renowned for its high quality software, the most famous of which recently has been *Syndicate*.

Former magazine editor David Wilson is EA's PR manager.

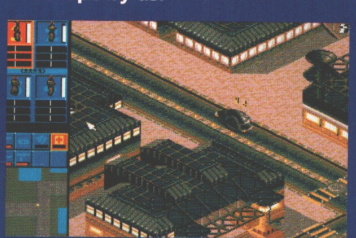
QUESTIONS

1. As far as your company is concerned, what have been the highlights for the Amiga in the past year?
2. As far as your company is concerned, what have been the worst moments for the Amiga in the past year?
3. How do you see the Amiga developing in 1994?
4. Are you developing for CD^{32}? If so what?
5. What are your Amiga projects for 1994?

1. The Amiga highlights for Electronic Arts in 1993 included the resounding success of *Desert Strike*, *Syndicate* and *Space Hulk*. As far as the Amiga market in general is concerned our highlight would be Commodore's shift of focus toward the Amiga 1200. The arrival and proliferation of this hardware breathed new life into the Amiga market and was instrumental in keeping EA developing for the Amiga.

2. The worst moments... As far as product was concerned I suppose we were disappointed by the market's response to *Kid Pix* for the Amiga.

This is an excellent paint package for children that is already available on Mac and PC and in those incarnations has received numerous awards and acclaim. It was developed and published by Brøderbond and converted to the Amiga and exclusively distributed in Europe by us.



Some said it was too grim, but Syndicate *proved extremely popular.*

The Amiga version has been well received by the press but sadly hasn't been as successful in the market place as we'd hoped. I suppose this speaks for the reluctance on the part of the European market to embrace or recognise the value of educational software to the extent that our American cousins do.

In terms of the Amiga market as a whole then the worst moment for 1993 has to be the indisputable decline of the Amiga.

3. We see the Amiga market becoming much more polarised in the forthcoming year between 'hits' and 'also rans'. As the market contracts, the only titles that will be financially successful will be the top five or so in the chart. As producing Amiga games becomes less profitable, so fewer products will become available and so publishers will take less chances. The only titles that publishers will produce will be 'sure fire hits'. On first inspection this may seem to be a good thing for the consumer, but then again those 'sure fire hits' will be 'safe' games.

That is to say that publishers will become less adventurous, less willing to take a risk. The danger is that unknown quantities like new genre titles, the *Populous* and *Sim Cities* of tomorrow, may never see the light of day.

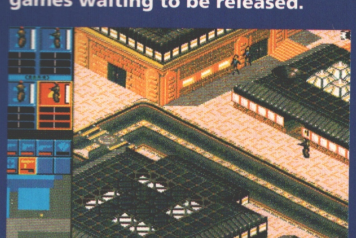
4. We have our first Amiga CD^{32} title scheduled to ship just in time for Christmas. It's called *The Labyrinth Of Time* and is a first person perspective graphic adventure set in several time zones. The game will take full advantage of the graphical capabilities of the CD^{32} and will offer the player a fantasy adventure encompassing graphic and logic puzzles.

Bullfrog is also working on several CD^{32} projects including *Syndicate* and *Biosphere*.

5. For 1994 Amiga development we have several projects up our communal sleeves. After the success of *Space Hulk*, we'll be looking to collaborate more closely with Games Workshop to produce more titles tied in to our *Warhammer 40000* license. We will be keen to produce 'key ports' for the Amiga - conversions of our most successful Sega titles that lend themselves to Amiga coding - a la *Desert Strike*, *Road Rash*, and *Madden*. Hot on the heels of *Syndicate* we will be working in conjunction with Bullfrog on some exciting new Amiga products - the first of which should be *Theme Park* scheduled at the moment for a March release.

Electronic Arts is quite clearly firmly behind the Amiga market although it obviously feels that there will be some 'thinning out' amongst the developers.

EA can be expected to continue developing for some time as it must believe that it will be one of the winners and not one of the 'also rans'. It certainly has one of the best looking schedules of games waiting to be released.



Syndicate *is the game that every Amiga owner had to have this year.*

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CHECK OUT THE LATEST FLIGHT SIMULATOR

This rally sim's so lifelike you can almost smell the high-octane fumes. **"We have lift off!"** Just what you **don't** want to hear from your computer co-driver...

He's screaming pace notes above the shriek of the engine... you're pushing it to the edge in the final thrilling stages of the Network Q RAC Rally.

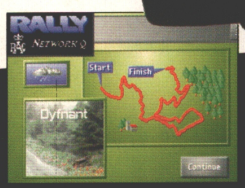
You're strapped into one of the five rally-bred supercars, speeding in the exact tracks of the '93 Rally leaders. Each car handles differently. Each tests your driving skills flat out.

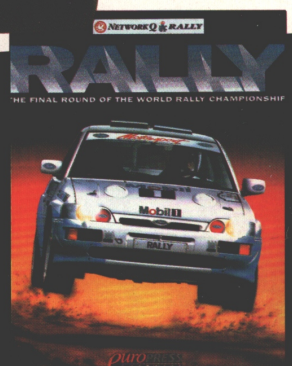
You're picking up vital seconds when you hang a bend late, clip a bank and flip into a roll – damage your car and you dent your chances.

It's the sequel to the top-selling RAC Rally game. But the sound's even more deafening, the digitised video graphics even more *in your face* for an atmosphere that's totally turbo-charged.

Flying around the world's toughest rally course is one thing. Staying on earth is another.

WARNING: CRASH HELMETS NOT PROVIDED.





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THE YEAR OF LIVING LEISURELY

EMPIRE

EMPIRE was formed by the amalgamation of Oxford Digital Enterprises and Entertainment International. Its most talked about project at the moment is *Cyberspace* and its previous credits include *Hunt for Red October*, *Sleeping Gods Lie* and *Team Yankee*.

Rik Yapp is the development manager.

1. The highlight for the Amiga was definitely the launch of the CD³². The Amiga was in danger of being squeezed out of the market by the consoles on one side and the PC on the other, and the positive step towards the pure games market clarifies Commodore's thinking.

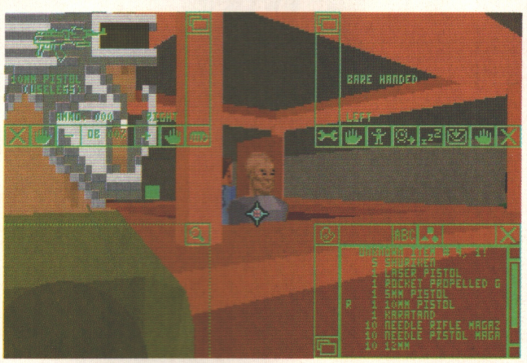
2. The worst moment of 1994 was the actual launch of the CD³² at the Science Museum when we couldn't get in despite having tickets.

3. The Amiga will probably split more obviously into two halves: the CD³² heralds one step sideways into the console market while the more powerful keyboard machines will continue to make inroads into niche industries alongside the established games front. This is probably essential as the middle ground that Amiga has dominated for so long is beginning to disappear.

4 & 5. We are currently investigating CD³² and continuing our development for Amiga with specific A1200 versions following. We currently have a number of Amiga games in development:

***Hannah Barbera's Animation Workshop* is a simple animation package including a digitizing option and lots of examples of animations, *Cyberspace* is a massive 3D role-playing game, *Dreamweb* is a stylish adventure and *Campaign II* is a comprehensive military sim covering the period between 1945 and the present day. We also have some other secret projects in the pipeline.**

Empire is clearly dedicated to the Amiga in all forms and employs some of the top Amiga programmers. 1994 looks to be a very promising year on the games front with all three of Empire's major releases looking like crackers.



CyberSpace is a technically innovative 3-dimensional graphical adventure set to hit your Amiga soon.

QUESTIONS

1. As far as your company is concerned, what have been the highlights for the Amiga in the past year?

2. As far as your company is concerned, what have been the worst moments for the Amiga in the past year?

3. How do you see the Amiga developing in 1994?

4. Are you developing for CD³²? If so what?

5. What are your Amiga projects for 1994?

GRAND

GRANDSLAM was formed in 1988 and publishes software for nearly all machines.

Steven B. Sargent of its Software Department spoke to us about the Amiga.

1. The best bits have been the continued development and support for the AA chipset machines and, of course, the arrival of the CD³².

2. The worst parts must be the increasing prominence of the PC and console markets over the Amiga market. Amigas are becoming less important to publishers.

3. Hopefully more people will purchase AA chipset machines, preferably with hard drives or CD. This would mean a large leap forward in what we can do on the Amiga as the biggest problems with games are lack of graphics memory on older machines and cramming all the data on to as few disks as possible! I really hope the CD³² sells well and I think it will.

4. We are most definitely producing for CD³². We are developing a version of our *Amiga Format* Gold award winning *Nick Faldo's Championship Golf* for CD³². This will include some stunning improvements over the standard Amiga version. We are also developing a version of our upcoming

INTERPLAY

Interplay is a small company that is probably most famous for *Battlechess*. *Battlechess* is one of those very few games that has an almost legendary status in the industry.

Alyson Goddard replied tersely on behalf of Interplay.

1. It's managed to maintain a good market share in the face of strong opposition.

2. The launch of CD^{32} - allowing Commodore to neglect support for the Amiga.

3. Poorly.

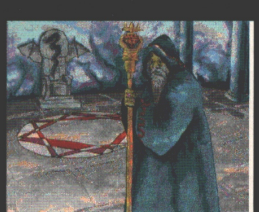
4. Yes, *Lord of the Rings II* and *Castles II*.

5. *Dungeon Master II*.

Interplay is not one of the companies that is fanatical about the Amiga. It appears that Interplay will only stay on board as long as it feels that it will get good returns and is suspicious of Commodore's intentions. Its list of releases consists exclusively of sequels to already popular games. Let's hope that it realises that the future belongs to Amiga users.

Beam me up Scotty, there's no intelligent life down here.* Star Trek *is just one of many exciting tie ins that Interplay has released or will be releasing on the Amiga over the last year or so.

SLAM



Seventh Sword of Mendor *certainly looks as though its going to be rather different than the average RPG fare.*

title *Reunion* for CD^{32}. *Reunion* and *Seventh Sword of Mendor* will also be developed for the A1200 and will require a hard disk to run. The standard Amiga version of *Reunion* with 64 colour graphics will take 5 or 6 disks, so imagine what a 256 colour graphics version will be like! We are looking to support the AA chipset whenever possible.

5. Grandslam has several projects nearing completion at the end of the year. These are *Realms of Darkness*, an isometric adventure/RPG with several new ideas and *Seventh Sword of Mendor*, a huge first person RPG utilising 64 colour graphics. This is also being developed for the A1200 specifically, but will probably only support machines with hard drives.

Next year we have *Reunion*, a game of space colonisation. This will be available in the first quarter and is shaping up to be one of the biggest Amiga games ever released. It will be available for the older machines, AA chipset machines and CD^{32}. We also have a new 'England' game coming out for the World Cup. This promises to be the ultimate football simulation. We have spent a long time on the design and it is going to be great! This will probably be available as AA chipset specific and on CD^{32}. There are also several other Amiga projects that are not announced yet but will be soon! They are going to be very interesting...

Grandslam has always been very keen on CD technology and it looks as if it is one of the companies that will leap firmly onto the CD^{32} bandwagon.

Let's hope that its support for the other Amiga formats remains undiminshed.

MICRO PROSE

MICROPROSE is the company co-founded by Sid Meier. It's famous for top flight sims and a range of quality games requiring mental agility more than manual dexterity. Simon Butler is its Group Marketing Manager.

1. The conversion of *Gunship 2000* and *F117A* to the Amiga are a tribute to the programming skills and tenacity of our internal developers. This has been a real highlight for us during 1993. More generally, seeing Amiga software sales hold up in the face of strong competition has been encouraging.

2. The launch of the A600 without a numeric keypad was a disaster - all those new or upgrading users unable to play *Civilization* or *Railroad Tycoon* without resorting to a keypad emulation programme.

3. No comment.

4 & 5. Yes we are developing for CD^{32}. Projects include *Gunship 2000* (specific version), *Pirates Gold*, *Tinhead* and *Impossible Mission*.

Another company hedging its bets and playing its cards close to its chest. It sounds as though we can expect more CD^{32} games than we can games for other Amigas.

The trouble with* Civilization *is that it takes so long to play. We play it for hours and hours and hours...

QUESTIONS

1. As far as your company is concerned, what have been the highlights for the Amiga in the past year?
2. As far as your company is concerned, what have been the worst moments for the Amiga in the past year?
3. How do you see the Amiga developing in 1994?
4. Are you developing for CD^{32}? If so what?
5. What are your Amiga projects for 1994?

Legends of Valour, *it's a role playing game.*

MINDSCAPE

MINDSCAPE was the company that brought to the Amiga great games including *Legend* and *Knightmare*. Sadly, James Morris told us: "Well we really only had yes or no answers so we haven't responded." Um, thanks James.

MIR

MIRAGE is the company that brought you *Humans* and the excellent *Ashes of Empire*.

Julia Coombs lets us in on a few of her innermost feelings, well possibly.

1. The launch of the Amiga CD^{32} has to be the highlight of 1993 for us. Our 'corporate brief' is to develop in-house products that make the most of the new CD based technology.

The CD^{32} is a terrific machine that will allow us to give Amiga owners their best games yet.

2. The worst thing has to be the overall shift from Amiga to consoles. After all the Amiga is a home computer so it gives people the opportunity to learn as well as play games.

3. The CD^{32} deserves to do well and as more and more publishers develop for it this should encourage people to go out and buy one.

As well as an up turn in CD^{32} sales I also think we'll be seeing more titles developed specifically for the A1200.

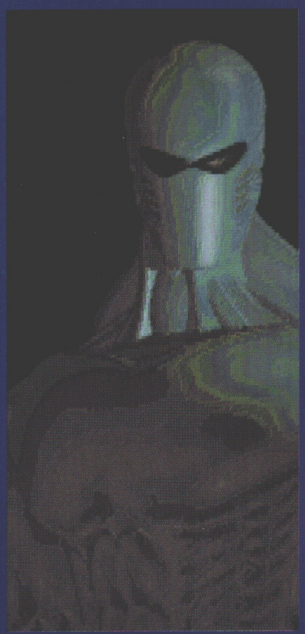
4 & 5. Our two major projects are *Rise of the Robots* and *The Adrenaline Factor*. Both of these will be released on A500, A1200 and CD^{32}.

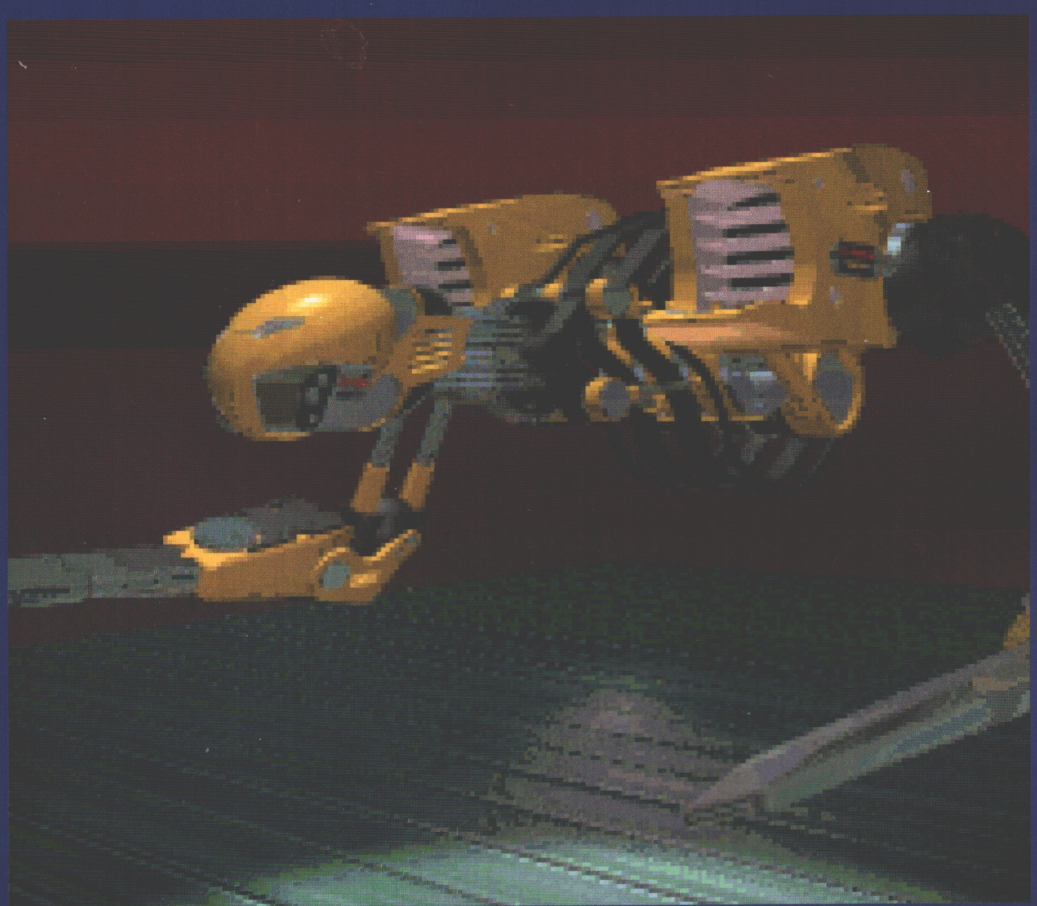
A young company, Mirage has not released many games for the Amiga but is obviously very keen to get involved with the new CD^{32} technology. Hopefully this signals a wave of new companies hoping to develop for the most exciting CD product available. Keep your eyes open and look out for a whole wave of games with incredible, high quality graphics.

R AGE

THE YEAR OF LIVING LEISURELY

It's still too early to tell, but if the gameplay of Rise of the Robots *comes anywhere near the quality of the breath-taking pictures that we keep seeing then Mirage will have a real classic on its hands.*





OCEAN

OCEAN is another of the major league developers with software available across the whole range of machines.

Stephen Hey works in its marketing Department and had this to say.

1. Once again the Amiga has gone from strength to strength. For Ocean the main Amiga event in 1993 was undoubtedly the arrival of *Jurassic Park*. Like the film, the game was heralded by hype but it was hype you could thankfully believe in.

The film was superb and the game more than lived up to the stiff expectations that it had to match. In *Jurassic Park* Ocean has a game which could stand proud in its own right even without the film.

The price drops helped to expand the user base dramatically and was good news for us all. Of course the launch of CD^{32} was a welcome addition to the Amiga range. It is an impressively specified machine which holds much promise for the future and Ocean is committed to pushing those specs to their limits when we launch *TFX* and *Inferno* on CD in the new year.

In the meantime the revered *Sleepwalker* and golf sim, *Ryder Cup Golf* will be making their CD^{32} premieres.

2. My personal worst moments in 1993 included Europe losing the Ryder Cup and Ulrika ditching me for that cameraman.

Despite strong competition from other formats the Amiga still holds its own and continues to host some of the most exciting, sophisticated and advanced small screen action.

3. 1994 looks to be an exciting year for the Amiga. We will see other software houses following Ocean in developing separately for the A500, A1200 and CD^{32} which means better games whichever machine you've got.

Some of the biggest advances will be on CD. As the CD^{32} is explored by programmers we should see some stunning new games that really use the CD^{32}.

4. Ocean have announced that *Sleepwalker* and the forthcoming *Ryder Cup Golf* will each have CD^{32} versions. Ocean has also commissioned Digital Image Design to produce versions of the airbreaking flight simulator *TFX* and the incredible *Inferno* specifically for the Amiga CD^{32}.

These will showcase the full potential of the machine and recreate cinematic adventures in a CD originated world.

5. As far as Ocean are concerned we can't wait for 1994 to arrive. Prospects for the CD^{32} look great and Ocean will continue to support the A1200 and A500 which both have large and loyal user bases.

We have several very exciting projects planned for 1994, some of which we've already been working on for a year or so. The football management simulation *Super League Manager* that is coming out for the A500 looks set to challenge the real world of football management.

Ocean seems to be really behind the Amiga, recognising that Commodore's machines have a very loyal collection of users who will continue to support their fave machine because it's the best.

Sleepwalker was Ocean's charitable event for 1993. Let's hope it keeps it up in 1994!

PRISM

PRISM does the amazing Pocket Power Range, proving that Amiga games can be cheap. Adrian Turner replied for them.

1. The best thing about 1994 was the continuing user-base not abandoning the Amiga for consoles and the number of A1200s being sold.

2. The worst moments - the (continuing) incompatibilities between the A500, A500+, A600 and A1200; as I deal exclusively with older titles for compiling or budget release it's the bane of my life! Too many sequels. Too many games with lovely graphics and no gameplay. Also the Amiga being caught up by the PC as a games machine.

3. More A1200-specific games, and of course, CD; I just hope the CD^{32} doesn't share the fate of the CDTV.

4. We don't develop as such, but if it takes off, we'll be the first in there with budget and compilation releases!

5. Continuing to expand the £2.99 Pocket Power collection (about 1,000,000 sold on Amiga to date) and the Triple Action compilations; maybe our first CD^{32} compilations by the summer?

It's heartening to see that companies such as Prism will be releasing CD compilations as soon as is possible as this should really encourage a wide range of people to get into the CD^{32}.

Fly fighter is one of the £2.99 Pocket Power range. It looks good, it plays well.

PSYGNOSIS

PSYGNOSIS is still famous for its *Lemmings*. It was started in 1984 with the aim of developing proper 16-bit software when everybody else was concentrating on 8-bit. Will it be as much of a pioneer in the 32-bit market? Only time will tell, but it is another company with a strong list of releases for 1994.

Mark Blewitt explained what it's concerns are for the future.

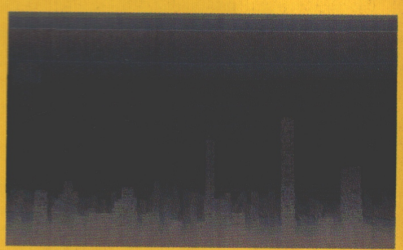
1. The advent of CD³² has to be the best moment of 1993. If nothing else it's reasonably pirate proof.

2. The worst thing is having to stand by and witness the true effect of piracy - the Amiga is in big trouble from pirates. We were saying the same thing about the ST two years ago and just look at what has happened.

3. The more CD specific products we can develop which are unpiratable the better. The only doubt we have about this is whether a big enough user base can be created without the assistance of free (pirated) software.

4. We are planning lots of CD³² titles but details have yet to be arranged.

5. Our projects for the Amiga in 1994 include *Wiz'n'Liz, Perihelion, Innocent, Brian the Lion, Benefactor, G2, Second Samurai, Puggsy, Microcosm, World Cup '94, Lemmings 3* plus other top secret titles.



Microcosm *is looking like one of the really hot games for the Amiga in 1994.*

Psygnosis is obviously very concerned about the problems of piracy.

We can only hope that this does not mean that it will be ignoring floppy based systems in the future.

RENEGADE

RENEGADE has a fine reputation for releasing products by some of the best and most innovative development teams there are. *Sensible Soccer* and *The Chaos Engine* must go down as two of the best ever Amiga games.

Tom Watson let us know what he thought.

1. There have been four major highlights for Renegade in 1993: First has been the continuing success of *Sensible Soccer* - we could never have hoped when the game was initially released in June of 1992 that it would dominate the charts throughout 1993 as well; hearty congratulations to those fine Sensible fellows! Second has been the success of *The Chaos Engine* for The Bitmap Brothers as it is not only a great game but it has proved (if proof were needed) that the Amiga market is still growing strongly for good games (i.e. Amiga owners aren't going to buy second-rate games). The third is the arrival of the Amiga CD³² - the early products for it may not prove to be earth-shattering explorations of the potential of CDs, but the products coming through in 1994 will get better and better. The fourth has been the new development talent that Renegade has been able to start working with; from Factor 5 in Germany to Terramarque in Finland (*Elfmania*) and Interactive binary Illusions in Australia (*Flight of the Amazon Queen*). Renegade has the potential to bring some astounding products through for Amiga owners during 1994.

2. The way in which publishers who produce products that the market rejects (usually because they are not good enough) blame the Amiga market and suggest it is dead/dying/slightly off-colour. It's not, it's just more demanding.

3. The Amiga will develop steadily. I think there will be more A1200 specific products rather than enhanced A500/600 products and we might even see several CD³² only games coming by the end of the year.

4. Renegade is set to publish products across all Amiga Formats, including the CD³².

5. Renegade's projects for 1994 include *KTM Motocross*, a dirt bike simulation, the long awaited *Sensible World of Soccer*, *Flight of the Amazon Queen*, a graphic adventure and the much talked about *Elfmania*.

Renegade were one of the first software houses to express its support for CD³². That has to be a good thing.

Elfmania *looks set to be a huge success for Renegade, taking on the consoles and beating them at their own game.*

TEAM 17

TEAM 17 was founded in 1990. It has always been committed to excellence and innovation in the Amiga field and employs a team of young programmers, most of whom work away from the head office in Wakefield. Martyn Brown, one of the directors of Team 17, had this to say.

1. Our success in the budget field is probably the thing we are most proud of although we've had considerable success all year.
As far as the Amiga is concerned, the CD^{32} has to be a massive boost and we're looking forward to producing games on that format.

2. The steady drift of good developers leaving the Amiga to support other platforms because of the piracy situation that exists on the Amiga.

3. I'm not 100% sure as yet. It all depends upon the success of the CD^{32} because it's the only future the Amiga has as a mass-market supported machine - and that's a shame. Don't get me wrong, there's always going to be Amigas but if Commodore go down then it'll be a very sad day for the machine and its users.

4. Yes, we are developing for CD^{32}. It'll be a while before our CD only stuff comes out and that's purely down to increased development time - we want it to be good, real good - and that takes time.
In 1994 you can expect some of our bigger titles like *Body Blows* and *Alien Breed 2* to appear on CD^{32} with much enhanced features, especially on the audio side.

5. It's a bit too early to say what we'll be up to next year, but rest assured that it means continued Amiga support.

Team 17 appear to be firmly committed to the Amiga, although there's the usual small element of uncertainty about the CD^{32}. Let's hope we see loads more quality games in the coming year, on all formats.

Racing fun from those people at Team17 in the shape of Overkill.

QUESTIONS

1. As far as your company is concerned, what have been the highlights for the Amiga in the past year?

2. As far as your company is concerned, what have been the worst moments for the Amiga in the past year?

3. How do you see the Amiga developing in 1994?

4. Are you developing for CD^{32}? If so what?

5. What are your Amiga projects for 1994?

SIERRA

SIERRA ON-LINE was formed in 1980 by Ken and Roberta Williams. The first Sierra release was *Mystery House* in 1980. It has always specialised in graphic adventures and was the first firm to use graphics and text in adventure games. Sam Flint is in charge of marketing for the UK and Europe.

1. The highlight of 1993 has to have been been deciding to convert one of our most popular PC titles for the Amiga – *Kings Quest IV – Heir Today, Gone Tomorrow.*

2. The uncertainty underlying Commodore's future.

3. See above.

4. Nothing planned.

5. Nothing planned at the moment.

Hmmm, not too much news to excite Amiga owners there. Some people seem to have slightly cold feet about the Amiga's future at the moment. This is short sighted. CBM or not the Amiga will survive.

Space Quest *is one of the easily recognizable Quest range from Sierra.*

THE YEAR OF LIVING LEISURELY

ZEP

ZEPPELIN produce a very wide variety of games from *Neighbours* and *Edd the Duck* to *Jocky Wilson's Darts* and *Graeme Souness Manager*. Paul Jobling is their commercial Director.

1. We consider the highlight of 1993 has been the development of *The Chaos Engine* even though this was not one of our products. As far as Zeppelin is concerned the product *Sink or Swim* has been the Amiga success of 1993 both in the UK and especially in Europe. This game

US GOLD

US GOLD is another enormous software house with interests that range beyond the Amiga. Bridgett Hirst is a public relations representative. She speaks to us now...

1. The highlights have to be *Streetfighter 2* sales reaching in excess of 130,000 and *Flashback* achieving the No.1 chart position. Oh, and the release of numerous classic titles on the Kixx XL range.

2. Low points are fewer products and fewer sales, apart, of course, from the Kixx XL range.

3. Ask Commodore!

4. Certain projects are being considered for the CD^{32} howevere none can be confirmed as yet!

5. *Winter Olympics*, which will actually be released prior to Christmas, but will be majoring during the Olympics in February '94. Plus around 20 extra titles on the Kixx XL range, including a number of Sierra and LucasArts titles.

In common with most of the large publishers US Gold is clearly not going to be drawn on specifics. It is also not prepared to offend anyone. US Gold also seems to believe that the budgets market is the growth area for the Amiga. Good!

Eye of the Beholder – this series of games set the pace that every other RPG had to match. Developed for US Gold by Westwood Associates of the USA, both I and II have a great many devoted fans.

VIRGIN

Virgin has a very high quality back catalogue that includes *Jimmy White's Snooker*, *Dune* and *Dune II*, *KGB*, *Lure of the Temptress* and *Reach for the Skies*. Ian Mathias explains:

1. The best moments were the launch of the A1200, the launch of the Video Toaster and the fact that the high-end A4000 has some style as a graphics work station, it might even turn out to be a Mac basher.

2. The worst moment was the effect that incompatibilities between the operating systems on the A500, A600 and A1200 had on our back catalogue.

3. Hopefully there will be a strengthened A1200 and CD^{32} user base in 1994. If, that is, Commodore can be aggressive in the light of many other machines such as Mega CD, 3DO, Jaguar and others which may come along.

4. We aren't developing for the newer formats, but we're very close to it. If the user-base continues to grow we will be putting some of our PC-based titles on to the Amiga.

5. Our current projects for 1994 include *Cool Spot*, *Crash Dummies*, *Beneath a Steel Sky* and *D-Day Operation Overlord*.

A cautionary story here. But the prospect of lots of 'safe' PC titles being converted to the Amiga is cheery enough thought.

Beneath a Steel Sky – Virgin is looking to port more PC games to the Amiga, hurrah!

PELIN

received excellent reviews and recently the question was asked 'Has *Lemmings* finally been surpassed?'

2. Undoubtedly the low point in 1993 for the Amiga was the discontinuation of the Amiga 600 pack which retailed under £200. This product could have competed with the consoles and might have won! It was also a computer (as opposed to a games machine) and could be programmed and therefore give kids the chance to try coding their own games.

3. We were surprised that the CD^{32} was not designed to be compatible with the A1200, a CD drive which is compatible with the A1200 would have been a logical and commercially viable development.

4. We certainly wish Commodore every success with the CD^{32} and have been impressed with its' capabilities. However we are not at present developing specifically for this machine, but would certainly consider doing so.

5. On the Amiga we are currently developing the following games for release in 1994; *Kawasaki Team Green*, *War Game - The Crusades*, *Sink or Swim 2* and *Hollywood Producer*.

Zeppelin was planning to put *Sink or Swim* and *Match of the Day* out on CD^{32} when we last spoke to Paul in August. Is this a case of cold feet? Certainly there is a great deal of caution about the CD^{32} from the developers in general. Lots of fine words about what a great machine it is, but little corresponding development. Don't worry, there soon will be.

...misgivings you migh have about ...d the Duck 2 is great.

STRIKE GOLD

The last year has seeN some astonishing developments in Amiga software and hardware. Only the best won the coveted ***Amiga Format*** Gold awards. Chris Lloyd takes you through them

The Amiga market hasn't stood still at all this year. 1993 has seen the launch of the next generation of 32-bit machines and the software and hardware markets have moved up a gear.

Every area of the Amiga has seen an improvement. On the hardware side lots of goodies for the A1200 have started to appear, including accelerator and RAM expansions to really give it some muscle. The range of drives available has broadened, with magneto optical and high density drives arriving as well as an IDE removable hard drive.

The new AGA chipset has given the realm of graphics a boost, putting the Amiga firmly into the limelight as a serious graphics engine. It has meant 256-colour digitisers and scanners, with the incredible 24-bit Epson GT-6500 at the top of the tree. *Deluxe Paint* and *Brilliance* put the new chipset through its paces and OpalVision added 24-bit splendour. Morphing arrived too, with outstanding cinematic quality effects.

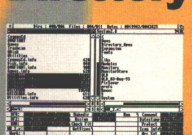
Wordworth and *Professional Page* have got even better, proving that the Amiga is quite capable of taking on all comers as a serious business machine. Classic games such as *Lemmings 2* and *Putty* have kept the Amiga in front as the game player to own too.

The Double-A Amigas haven't been around long enough for people to really get to grips with them. Over the next year we can expect things to be much more colourful.

There have been a few A1200 versions of games but almost no A1200 only games. Coming soon are games written with the 32-bit machine in mind from the start. Games written with 2Mb of RAM, a 256-colour screen and a 32-bit processor should be stunning.

For the moment though, let's review the treasures of 1993.

Directory Opus 4



98% ***AF***45
£59.95 Silica
☎ 081-3091111

This is the kind of program you didn't know you had to have, until you used it. It's a directory utility which gives an unprecedented amount of control over your files. You can move, delete, rename and view files and perform more complex operations. Almost everything can be configured. Version 4 supports the new Double-A chipset, happily viewing HAM-8 pictures.

Directory Opus hails from INOVAtronics in the States and was originally released at £79.95, it's now better value than ever.

AMOS Professional

97% ***AF***40 £49.99 Europress Software ☎ 0625 859333

The AMOS Basic programming language was an instant hit, it's easy, flexible and enables you to get at all the juicy custom chips without taking a degree in hexadecimal. *AMOS Professional* is an enhanced version with a new editor, rewritten accessory programs and a host of new commands. There are plans for a Double-A chipset version of AMOS which will give the language a new lease of life on the latest range of Amigas. If you're looking for a painless introduction to programming but don't want to miss out on the great things possible with an Amiga then AMOS is for you.

OpalVision

96% ***AF***41
£499.99
Indie Direct
☎ 0543 419999

Once you've worked with 24-bit colour you never look back,

with 16.7 million colours to play with the results are simply gorgeous. OpalVision consists of a 24-bit graphics card and *OpalPaint* software. The maximum resolution is 768 by 576 pixels and the range of drawing and image processing tools is stunning. Brushes can emulate chalk, watercolours and pencil, amongst others, and the screen can emulate hessian, paper or canvas. The result is incredibly realistic pieces of artwork. There are a range of high power tools including magic wand, a powerful select tool which is a real boon when working with so many colours. Shipment of the new video modules should be in November, yummy.

Real 3D Version 2

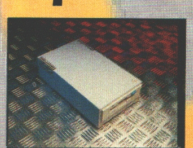
96% ***AF***46
£379 Silica
☎ 081-3091111
This raytracing package was a revolutionary step when first released and Activa has been continually supporting and developing it since. The latest incarnation can do extremely clever things including motion blur, soft shadows, fractal objects and surface patches which add texture to a surface. The interface is flexible and configurable. You can open up nine view windows and rotate the view to any angle. It's expensive but it's the ultimate graphic creation system.

SyQuest IDE Drive

95% ***AF***49
£659 Power Computing ☎ 0234 843388
The new generation of Amigas use the IDE (Integrated Drive Electronics) connector rather than SCSI (Small Computer Systems Interface) which makes adding lots of hard drives difficult. IDE can handle two drives as opposed to SCSI's eight. An obvious answer is a removable hard drive, SyQuest is the most famous manufacturer and with the release of an IDE version of its 105Mb removable hard drive you have unlimited storage potential without a costly SCSI controller. It fits straight into the spare drive bay on an A4000.

A1200 owners will need to use the external version. Plug in the cables, format the disk and away you go.

Magneto Optical Drive



95% ***AF***44
£879 Power Computing ☎ 0234 843388
This is a weighty drive, it takes 128Mb disks. It's a cross between a removable hard drive and a CD drive. It connects to an SCSI controller and acts as a removable hard drive but with bigger disks and greater data integrity. It's expensive but, once you've bought the drive, extra 128Mb disks are £39.95 each. Spend another £320 and you have a Gigabyte of extra storage. It's as fast as a slow hard drive, which is very nippy for removable media.

Professional Page 4

94% ***AF***46
£199.95 Silica
☎ 081-3091111
The latest and greatest version of this mighty DTP package.

Version 4 has full AGA support with 256 colour mode and the ability to edit double page spreads. Support for its Compugraphic fonts has been improved with kerning adjustment and font preview to speed up the display. Despite the new screen modes it's as fast as ever.

Proffesional Page 4 is the work of Gold Disk, a competitive and innovative company that is constantly working to ensure that *Professional Page* remains the best Amiga DTP package available, the new year will see updates of this winner.

It is the best DTP package for the Amiga and *Professional Page* has all the features you would expect and then a whole lot more.

If coupled with a fast Amiga with lots of RAM you have a Desk-top Publishing system that will rival any other.

GAMES GOLD

Amiga Format handed out 28 Format Gold awards for original games released in 1993, if you are looking for the best games this is the place to start.

Putty
95% *AF*40
£25.99 System 3

Lemmings 2
94% *AF*46
£29.99 Psygnosis

HistoryLine 1914-1918
94% *AF*43
£34.99 Blue Byte

Gunship 2000
***AF*49 94%**
£35.99 Microprose

Soccer Kid
93% *AF*51
£29.99 Krisalis

Flashback
93% *AF*45
£30.99 Delphine

Diggers
93% *AF*52
£N/A Millennium

Caesar Deluxe
92% *AF*52
£29.99 Impressions

Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis
92% *AF*43
£37.99 LucasArts

SERIOUS GOLD

Here are all the *Format* Golds for serious software and hardware in 1993. We've quoted a price and a supplier, although exact prices vary and it's worth shopping around!

Directory Opus 4
98% *AF*45
£49 Software Demon
☎ 0738 331039

Epson GT-6500 Scanner
97% *AF*44
£799.99
First Computer Centre
☎ 0532 319444

AMOS Professional
97% *AF*40
£49.99 Europress Software
☎ 0625 859333

Real 3D Version 2
96% *AF*46
£379 Silica
☎ 081-3091111

OpalVision
96% *AF*41
£499.99 Indi Direct
☎ 0543 419999

Magneto Optical Drive
95% *AF*44
£879 Power Computing
☎ 0234 843388

Canon BJ-10SX
95% *AF*48
£219.95 Gordon Harwood Computers ☎ 0773 836781

Canon BJ-200
95% *AF*48
£329.95 Gordon Harwood Computers ☎ 0773 836781

SyQuest IDE Drive
95% *AF*49
£659 Power Computing
☎ 0234 843388

Maths Dragons
94% *AF*46
£14.99 Coombe Valley Educational Software
☎ 0626 779695

Professional Page 4
94% *AF*46
£199.95 Silica
☎ 081-3091111

Video Backup System
***AF*45 93%**
£59.95 Power Computing
☎ 0234 843388

G-Lock
***AF*47 93%**
£299 Silica ☎ 081-3091111

Power HD Drive

STRIKE GOLD

GAMES GOLD

KGB
91% *AF*42
£30.99 Virgin

Caesar
91% *AF*41
£29.99 Impressions

Legends of Valour
91% *AF*44
£39.99 US Gold

B17 Flying Fortress
91% *AF*46
£39.99 Microprose

Sleepwalker
91% *AF*44
£25.99 Ocean

Robocod AGA
91% *AF*49
£25.99 Millennium

Syndicate
91% *AF*49
£34.99 Bullfrog

Blade of Destiny
91% *AF*50
£39.99 US Gold

Yo!Joe!
91% *AF*50
£26.99
Hudson Soft

RoboSport

Sportster Modem

93% ***AF***52
£269.99
Phoenix
☎ 0532 350091
Fast and cheap, this modem has a lot to offer. It has V32Bis speed, Group III fax capability and full BABT approval. Meaning it's quick, 14,000 bits per second, can send faxes and there's no problem connecting it to the phone system. It passed every test thrown at it flawlessly. It's made by US Robotics in the States who have plenty of experience putting modems together and that shows. It comes with Opticomm software which includes the comms program *Ncomm* so you can be up and running in no time.

Power HD Drive

93% ***AF***48
£99.95 Power Computing
☎ 0234 843388
One of the annoying things about using flash graphics and DTP programs is the size of the file they create. The standard Amiga disk drive holds 880K, not enough for seriously big files. Enter Power Computing's excellent high density disk drive which can store twice that amount of data. It uses a standard PC HD mechanism with a custom chip and some RAM to handle the flow of data. A 24-bit picture can easily use over a Megabyte of disk space. For half as much again as a normal disk drive you can kit yourself out with twice as much storage space, well worth it.

Blizzard 1200

93% ***AF***50
£179 New Horizon Computers
☎ 0989 750260
Wonderful as the A1200 is there comes a time when you want more. It hasn't taken too long for memory boards to start appearing and the Blizzard 1200 stands out as the best. It comes with 4Mb of 32-bit RAM with the option to add a further 4Mb. It has a real time clock and a socket to add a maths co-processor to really give maths intensive programs a boost. New Horizon Computers isn't resting on its laurels. A new 68030 accelerator is available and you can trade in your memory card at full retail value against it. If you're serious about getting into graphics you're going to need more RAM and this is an ideal solution.

Trifecta 500 LX

92% ***AF***49
80Mb £295
Power Computing
☎ 0234 843388
One of the fastest moving items distributed by Power Computing, the Trifecta 500LX comes from the American peripheral manufacturer ICD. It boasts connectors for SCSI, SCSI 2 and IDE hard drives, meaning you can connect all sorts of drives. SCSI 2 is particularly fast. Extra RAM and a PC emulator can also be fitted making the Trifecta a very versatile beast indeed. There are memory and autobooting disable switches and thorough documentation. The case is rather smart too. It's not the cheapest hard drive for the A500 but it's one of the best.

Brilliance

92% ***AF***52
£143.90
Hobbyte
☎ 0727 856005
A newcomer to the Amiga paint package market and one which has impressed from the off. It's packed with tools and very fast. There is extensive animation control and a huge range of special effects which are all beautifully executed. These include a powerful transparency function and a very fast and flexible series of gradient fill functions. It's made by Digital Creations.

SERIOUS GOLD

93% *AF*48
£99.95 Power Computing
☎ 0234 843388

Blizzard 1200
93% *AF*50
£179 New Horizon Computers
☎ 0989 750260

Sportster Modem
93% *AF*52
£269.99 Pheonix
☎ 0532 350091

ImageFX
***AF*45 92%**
£149.95 Silica
☎ 081-3091111

Vista Pro 3
92% *AF*46
£69.96 Meridian
☎ 081-5433500

Ricoh LP1200
92% *AF*41
£821.33 Silica
☎ 081-3091111

Trifecta 500 LX
***AF*49 92%**
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VideoPilot V330
92% *AF*51 £1,299 Aico International ☎ 0635 49797

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***AF*47 92%**
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Brilliance
***AF*52 92%**
£143.90 Hobbyte
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The Publisher
***AF*43 92%**
£24.99 First Computer Centre ☎ 0532 319444

Denny Atkin's Best Amiga Tips and Secrets
***AF*52 92% £18.45**
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***AF*43 92%**
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Understanding Imagine 2
***AF*43 92%**
Alternative Image
☎ 0533 440041

Wordworth 2
91% *AF*41
£99 Software Demon
☎ 0738 331039

Reasoning with Trolls

Vista Pro 3

92% *AF*52
£69.96
Meridian
☎ 081-5433500

Unless your surname is Constable, generating pictures of landscapes may sound a slightly weird way to pass the time. But creating fractal landscapes is fascinating and the results stunning. *Vista Pro 3* is the latest and greatest version of *Vista* which can now handle 256 colour and HAM-8 pictures, although you need 6Mb for this. It was written by Virtual Reality Labs from the States and is currently being translated to other platforms.

Denny Atkin's Best Amiga Tips and Secrets

92% AF52
£18.45
Compute Books

Enthusiasm can be catching and this chap has bags of it. The book is a gold mine of useful information on all aspects of the Amiga from Workbench and CLI to comms and graphics. It's written in an easy, readable style and uses touches of humour to ease the sometimes dry subject-matter. If you want to get to know your Amiga more intimately then this is an ideal read.

Bars and Pipes Pro 2

90% *AF*46
£299.95
Meridian
☎ 081-5433500

There is little doubt that this is the top MIDI sequencer for the Amiga.

The latest version can be integrated with graphics and 16-bit sampler cards. The publishers Blue Ribbon Soundworks have already updated it once this year and are about to release the supplement *Performance Tools*.

The Demo Collection

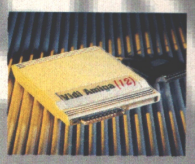
90% *AF*41
£19.99
Almathera Systems
☎ 081-687 0490

A blinding CDTV disk crammed with the cream of Amiga demos as well as a good helping of PD games. There are all kinds of groovy music, animations and jazzy demo effects on offer.

This is the kind of thing the CDTV was designed for, a small PD library on one silver disk. Almathera is dedicated to supporting the CDTV, by the time you read this *Demo Collection 2* will be available which they promise to be even better.

As with all Almathera's disks the *Demo Collection* is compatible with CD^{32} as well.

Vidi-12 AGA



90% *AF*50
£99.95 Rombo Productions
☎ 0506 414631

Already renowned for video digitisers Rombo has come up with another winner with the AGA version of its 12-bit digitiser. It can grab in a marvellous 256 colours and HAM-8 from still images using a built in RGB splitter. Moving images can be captured in 32 colours in real-time producing very smooth digitised films. To get better results than this you have to start spending a lot more money

Kid Pix

90% *AF*46
£25.99
Electronic Arts
☎ 0753 549442

A paint package aimed squarely at children but which is a good laugh for all ages.

A surprising feature is sound, most functions come with a wacky sound effect. The first thing anyone new to the program does is try every icon to see what noise effect it generates.

There is also a large library of clip art to paste onto your child's interesting abstract creation. It's easy to use and great fun too. The kids will love it.

As well as more conventional drawing tools *Kid Pix* has a wide range of fun special effects such as splash and broken glass.

GAMES GOLD

90% *AF*40
£29.99 Ocean

Pinball Fantasies
90% *AF*41
£29.99
21st Century

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90% *AF*43
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1869
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£29.99 Flair

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Dune II
90% *AF*50
£30.99 Virgin

Micro Machines
90% *AF*52
£25.99 Codemasters

SERIOUS GOLD

91% *AF*46
£14.99 Coombe Valley Educational Software
☎ 0626 779695

VIDI-12 AGA
90% *AF*50
£99.95 Rombo Productions
☎ 0506 414631

Rockey
90% *AF*42
£249.99 Indi Direct
☎ 0543 418079

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£185 Power Computing
☎ 0234 843388

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£129.99 Indi Direct
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90% *AF*48
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90% *AF*46
£25.99 Electronic Arts
☎ 0753 549442

AMIGA FORMAT PRESENTS...

...two top titles to help you get the most out of your machine

GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR AMIGA 1993

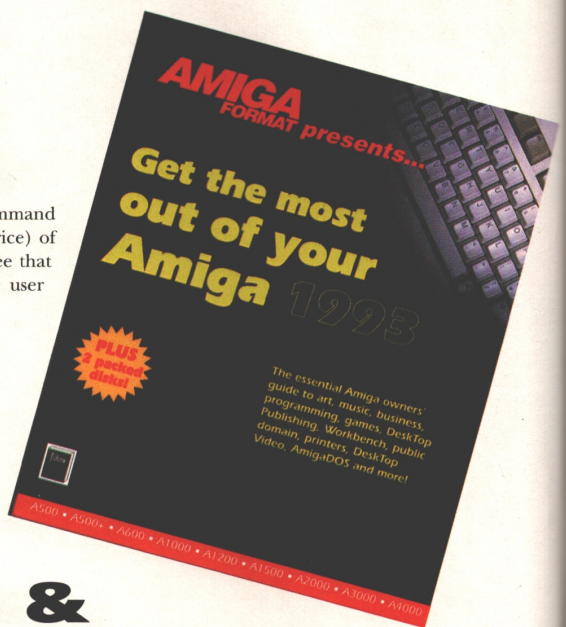
We got 10 independent Amiga experts to write today's guide to the Amiga. 'Get the Most... 1993' covers every Amiga application, from desktop video to programming, from games to music, explaining the jargon, the techniques and the best software and hardware to buy.

There are chapters too on the Amiga's history, setting up your new Amiga and getting to grips with Workbench.

Thinking of getting a printer? A hard disk? More RAM, an extra floppy disk drive or an accelerator? We give you tips on what to look for and what to buy.

Add a complete AmigaDOS 2 & 3 command reference plus two disks (included in the price) of top Amiga utilities, and we think you'll agree that this is one book that no serious Amiga user should be without!

DIMENSIONS: 185mm (W) x 223mm (H)
PAGES: 336
DISKS: 2
PRICE: £19.95
ISBN: 1 898275 00 9
ORDER CODE: FLB009A



POCKET WORKBENCH & AMIGADOS REFERENCE

How do you use Workbench to copy files? How do you format floppy disks? How do you move things from one folder to another? If you've just got your Amiga, Workbench can be confusing – unless you've got expert help on hand.

This reference book has been made small enough to slip into a pocket, yet big enough to incorporate everything you need to know about Workbench and AmigaDOS. It's also been wire-bound so that you don't have to hold it open while you work – not everyone wants to type one-handed.

As well as help for beginners, there are sections on Workbench menus, preferences and the supplied Tools and Utilities.

While for advanced users, there's a full AmigaDOS 2 & 3 command references, listing all commands in alphabetical order and quoting their function, syntax and some example uses.

We wanted to design the single most useful reference guide possible for serious Amiga owners. We think we've done it.

* Contains some material also published in 'Get the Most out of your Amiga 1993.'

DIMENSIONS: 100mm (W) x 190mm (H)
PAGES: 168
DISKS: None
PRICE: £9.95
ISBN: 1 898275 01 7
ORDER CODE: FLB017A

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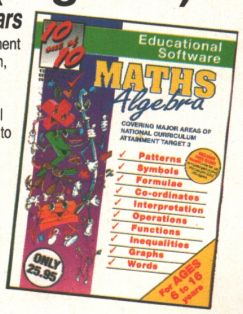
Maths (Algebra)

For children 6 to 16 years

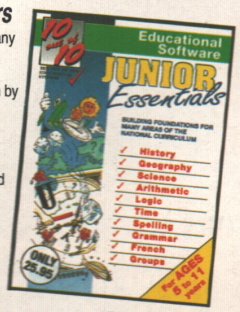
Covering many areas from Attainment Target 3 of the National Curriculum, the *10 out of 10* Maths (Algebra) package is packed with subjects, levels and activities to challenge all children from Key Stage 1 right up to Key Stage 4.
Following sequences, interpreting graphs, solving equations and numerous other algebraic skills have never before been so much fun. This is the fun way to practise and become fast and proficient with the manipulations needed for high examination marks.



Junior Essentials¤

For children 5 to 11 years

A truly flexible package covering many topics essential for building a good educational foundation. The areas covered have been carefully chosen by a team of experts and come from several subjects and levels of the National Curriculum.
The child's progress in these areas is constantly monitored and recorded and parents or teachers can easily discover where a child needs help. As with all the *10 out of 10* series, further motivation to play the games and learn more is added in the form of High Score Tables.



Dinosaurs

For all ages

This package is the fun way to learn the truth about dinosaurs. The six games all have superb digitised graphics to make a whole area of history – dinosaurs – come alive.
If you came face to face with a tyrannosaurus would you run away? Or are you safe because it's a vegetarian and wouldn't eat you? This, together with 100s of other interesting facts, can be discovered from this enthralling package.
The six games – all with single and multi-player options – are educational fun for everyone.

Maths (Number)

For children 6 to 16 years

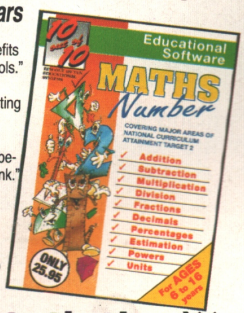
"Well thought out to offer real benefits to children studying in British schools." – *PC Plus (July '93)*

"Educationally worthwhile and exciting to play – a rare combination." – *Archimedes World (December '92).*

"Unique in home-based programs because of the National Curriculum link." – *The Micro User (September '92)*

"Excellent for reinforcing specific mathematics knowledge." – *Junior Education (July '93)*

"The 10 out of 10 Series lives up to its name." – *PC Home (August '93)*



Early Essentials

For children under 7 years

"Outstanding. All of the activities are not only very enjoyable but they're well thought through. It's one of the best multi-purpose infant packages I've seen in a long while. If you have young kids get it for the home. If you're a teacher, hammer on the headteacher's door and beg for money to buy a copy." – *Archimedes World (July '93)*

"At just £25.95 you'll be hard pressed to find anything which even comes close to Early Essentials." – *Micro Computer Mart (Sept. '93)*

English

For children 6 to 16 years

"Everything being done is relevant to the player's education. An invaluable curriculum experience, plenty of fun, lots of variety." – *PC Home (November '93)*

"Guaranteed to sustain the attention of even reluctant learners." – *RISC User (January/February '93)*

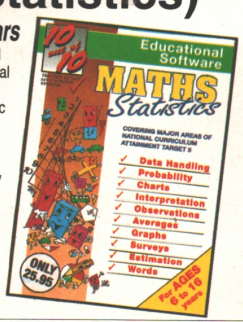
"Most importantly, as the games are fun, children can't help but learn." – *Acorn Computing (March '93)*

"Allows progression from Junior school age right up to GCSE level ." – *Amiga User International (Sept. '93)*

Maths (Statistics)¤

For children 6 to 16 years

Attainment Target 5 of the National Curriculum is Data Handling – a vital area of Mathematics. *10 out of 10* Maths (Statistics) covers 36 specific topics from that subject.
In this package, recording animal sightings in an animated pond or rolling dice are just two of the many challenges that children will relish as they learn about statistics. And can graph drawing be a game? It becomes arcade action as bricks and bombs are dropped onto the charts. This is a really enjoyable way to learn about statistics.



French¤

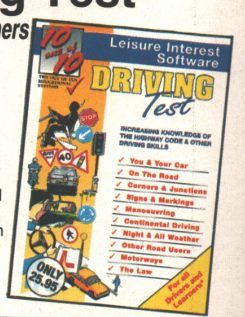
For children 6 to 16 years

This suite of six educational games will give fun and motivation to all children learning French. The package is designed with the Modern Languages National Curriculum firmly in mind and contains many challenges to reinforce facts stated in Attainment Targets 3 and 4.
10 out of 10 French is essential for children on Key stages 3 and 4, but the numerous parent and teacher customisation options make the software suitable for all children – however young – who are learning the French language.

Driving Test¤

For all drivers and learners

Whether you're a novice learner or an advanced expert, there's plenty you can learn from this package. There are thousands of built-in questions and you can choose whether you want to answer them directly or add to the fun by trying them within games.
The six games have been designed to be fun for all adults and include strategy, mental agility, coordination and more. And, if you think you are up to it, you can "*take the test*" – a challenge covering many areas of the Driving Test.



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The 10 out of 10 Series is available for Acorn 32-bit computers (Archimedes), Commodore Amiga and IBM/PC and compatibles. If you buy any two items before Xmas 1993, £15 will be deducted from the total price. At the time of going to press, titles marked ¤ were not available on all formats and may not be released before Xmas. They may however be ordered at the offer price. Please ring for availability.

The *10 out of 10* Series is available from all good computer software suppliers

The Vidi Amiga Range

Rombo, are proud to announce the launch of their new range of Multimedia Digitisers.

Each digitiser has been designed with total flexibility in mind, by offering a cost effective upgrade path between models. Giving the user complete peace of mind, and the freedom to choose a digitiser for his present requirements. But reassuring him, that if those change, he can move up to the next model. All Vidi Amiga's now have a similar user interface, so moving between products is easy !

Vidi Amiga (12) RT, offers all the functionallity and specification of Vidi (24) RT, but in 12-bit. Capturing 4096 colour images in real-time from any video source. This includes TV, Video Recorder, Video Camera, Satellite etc. etc.

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Vidi Amiga (24) RT, will push your Amiga to its limit. Real-time image capture in excess of broadcast quality. True colour, photo -realistic picture files grabbed from any video source. Display resolutions up to 1472 x 576, what more can I say !

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THE YEAR OF LIVING SERIOUSLY

Armed with a fax machine and a set of questions Chris Loyd takes a close look at the Amiga's serious software scene.

Games are just the beginning. The Amiga has an enviable range of serious software available with everything from word processing to sophisticated 24-bit image processing. We decided to approach the developers of this serious software, both here and in the states, and ask them about the last year and about their oopes for the future.

The Amiga market in America is quite different from the European end. The best-selling Amiga over there is the A4000 and it's seen as a graphics machine. In the states the Amiga has established itself well in specialised markets, particularly in video work.

In Europe the Amiga has hit a mass-market audience and the emphasis is on a wider range of software. Productivity applications, such as word processors and spreadsheets, are often the second reason behind games for using an Amiga. Rather than a machine to meet a specific need, it is seen as a multi-purpose home machine.

The CD^{32} has been greeted with approval. It clearly shows that Commodore is in the ring and fighting. Although it is not suited to productivity software at the moment, the addition of a keyboard and disk drive can turn it into a useful, 'proper' computer.

All the software houses we approached expressed concern over CBM's financial position and relief at it's restructuring.

The software houses may be critical of Commodore at times, but their enthusiasm for the Amiga is entirely undiminished. As one developer put it: "At the price there is no real alternative".

THE QUESTIONS

We picked the cream of Amiga serious software developers and faxed the following questions to them.

1. What has been your company's best-selling program over the past year?

2. What do you hope will be your best-selling program for 1994?

3. What was your company's highlight in 1993?

4. What was your company's worst moment in 1993?

5. What are you developing for 1994?

6. How do you see the Amiga market developing over the forthcoming year?

ACTIVA
Andric Van Es

Activa is responsible for the magnificent *Real 3D*. This is currently the best 3D rendering package you can get for the Amiga, or any machine for that matter. *Media Point* is a multimedia system not unlike *Scala*.

1 & 2. *Media Point* and *Real 3D* version 2 have both sold very well. Next year version 3 of *Media Point* should continue the success.

3. *Real 3D* version 2 took a long time to develop and when finished we were very pleased with the results indeed.

4. Difficult to say, when you have a really bad moment you don't want to publicise it.

5. We will continue to build on our Amiga user base, *Real 3D* and *Media Point* are in continual development. We are working on rendering engines for powerful systems like the Silicon machines. You can use the cheaper Amigas to do all the 3D modelling on and use the much more expensive machines to do the final rendering. Although the A4000 is fast, doing complex 3D is a very complicated procedure.

6. A slow upward turn. We would like to see new, faster Amigas. We will support any new machines

when we see them. The CD[32] is a games machine unsuited to software like ours although it would make an ideal presentation tool.

ASDG
Dan Esenther

ASDG is an American company which started out producing hardware. From there it got involved in scanners which led to the excellent *Art Department* image processing program. Recent projects include a 24-bit printing utility, *TruePrint/24* and the amazing *MorphPlus*.

1. Our best seller for '93 was *Art Department Professional*.

2. *Art Department Professional*.

3. The highlight for '93 was the television movie *Babylon 5*, for which we produced some of the special effects and which used our software and hardware heavily. It won an Emmy award for outstanding special effects.

4. The worst moment was when Newtek's Video Toaster 4000 was announced just after we released *T-Rexx Professional 2.0*, our Toaster system controller. *T-Rexx* had to be updated again before it even had time to hit the store shelves. It ended up as a bonus to the customers because we added Toaster 4000 support much more quickly than we otherwise would have.

5. *Art Department Professional* and *MorphPlus* upgrades should appear soon. Other projects are in the works, but I can't give details yet.

6. I see the Amiga expanding its position in the video and multimedia areas. We are finally seeing people on other platforms recognising just how powerful a tool the Amiga can be.

CLOANTO
Michele Console Battilana

Cloanto hails from Italy and has produced a paint package, a word processing package and font creation programs.

Art Department Professional *and* MorphPlus *give you an unprecedented degree of control over graphics. All sorts of wonderful effects are possible.*

1. The best seller in 1993 has been *Personal Write* which has been the best selling word processor in Germany and Italy for some time. In the UK our best seller has been *Personal Paint*.

2. I expect *Personal Paint* to be our best seller in 1994. It is a fresh and elegant paint package. It follows a 'power to the people' philosophy.

3. Our highlight has been the release of *Personal Paint*. We also recently released *Personal Fonts Maker Colour Extensions* which are technically just as advanced. We had to reprint *Personal Paint* several times to satisfy the initial demand, especially in Germany.

4. I cannot think of a single worst moment, it is sad to see how a technologically advanced and usable system like the Amiga has been surrounded by an organisation that could not transform it into an excellent product for both users and developers. Personally I find the Amiga environment most demanding and stimulating. However, beyond a certain level it becomes harder and harder to work with high standards, which is what we would like to do.

5. In 1994 we will probably be adding features to existing products. Adding features is not difficult but it can be dangerous. The difficult thing is to manage complexity, to keep things simple. *Personal Paint* will be enhanced with some very advanced features that would normally be sold as stand-alone products. We are working on a simple and inexpensive software upgrade program.

6. I can see little development being done now which I guess is a consequence of insufficient long term investment. Commodore isn't doing much development itself. Can you remember when you bought a PET or a C64, you could immediately program in Basic or buy one book and move into machine code? Now the Amiga

1994 and CD

Great things have been promised of CD technology. The world will be a better place for it, it seems. CDs are undoubtedly a marvellous way of storing digital data. They have a huge storage capacity, are cheap to make and unpiratable. A revolution in the games industry is already taking place.

The ramifications for serious applications are less far-reaching but still significant. The CD is an ideal way to store huge libraries of data. A word processor or DTP package could have access to hundreds of fonts all on a single silver disk. A music program could use CDs full of sampled sounds. An animation package could come supplied with 650Mb of clip art.

The CD[32] is a games player and development is currently aimed towards producing top drawer games on CD. With the advent of a CD drive for the A1200 and A4000 things will change as serious applications are exposed to cheap, massive storage space.

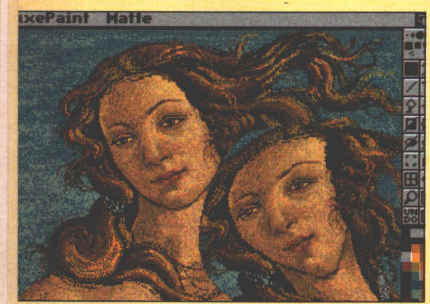
THE YEAR OF LIVING

Personal Paint *is a 'fresh and elegant' paint package from those fabulously clever italians Cloanto.*

doesn't even come with an A-Rexx manual and everything else is very expensive, scattered about from various sources. Back in 1992 I suggested to Commodore that they bundled a CD-ROM with all the documentation and source code as well as useful utilities for the Amiga. It would encourage people to buy a CD drive and give people access to the information they needed. Peripherals have always been profitable for Commodore and its dealers. Now things are moving more towards games, that's not really my field so I'll have to wait and see what happens.

Deluxe Paint *doing it stuff. It has established itself as the most famous Amiga art package ever with sales to match, pushing well into six figures.*

Digita International Jeremy Rihll



The usually ebullient Jeremy was less than forthcoming when asked about the Amiga scene. The excuse being that Digita is terribly busy cooking up its new project. Digita is a well established company best known for its word processors and accounts packages.

1. Without a doubt *Wordworth* is our best seller, we've sold in excess of 100,000 units in '93.

2. I can only give the code name at the moment I'm afraid, *GTI*. You'll have to wait and see.

3. Commodore choosing to bundle *Wordworth* and *Digita Print Manager* with the Desktop Dynamite pack, worldwide!

4. Clearly Commodore's financial rough patch has been the worst aspect of '93.

5. *GTI*, *Wordworth v3*, *Money Matters v3.1* and *Digita Print Manager v2*. We also have plans for a CD^{32} project with CBM.

6. A lot depends on the success of CD^{32} and the Desktop Dynamite pack. We'll know by Christmas!

Electronic Arts Nick Channon

One of the giants of the software business, EA publishes a wide variety of programs around the world. The most famous piece of serious software for the Amiga is *Deluxe Paint*, which has been bundled with every Amiga for quite a while now. Commodore says it has bought about 1.25 million copies from EA. *Deluxe Paint* has long been regarded as the standard Amiga paint package and has now been upgraded to use the new Double-A modes, including HAM-8. EA played its cards very close to its chest.

1. *Deluxe Paint AGA* has been very popular, it has sold well in all versions including the new enhanced AGA version which we launched this year.

2. *Deluxe Paint* again, we also have high hopes for *Deluxe Music*, a MIDI based music studio package, which we are just about to launch.

3. *Deluxe Paint AGA*, the Amiga is a wonderful graphics tool

4. No real problems.

5. We plan to bring out a number of serious packages. It is still a strong market although we are more selective in what we release. We want to concentrate on top notch titles.

6. The launch of the A1200 has breathed new life into the Amiga market and extended Electronic Art's commitment to it.

Europress Software Amanda Thomas

Part of the Europress group which includes a publishing division, Europress Software started life in

The* Fun School *series has proved enormously popular for Europress Software. It uses a series of interactive lessons to teach the basics.

1984 and has grown to be the UK's seventh largest software house. It claims to have 75% of the educational software market in UK and is most famous on the Amiga for the *Fun School* range and *AMOS Basic*. It is adopting the wait and see approach on CD^{32}, "we are watching the market like a hawk" as its Public Relations Executive put it.

1. Our best seller has been *Fun School 4* (7-11 years). It's a series of educational games to teach Geography, History and Maths using Sammy the Spy. It has sold 5,000 copies up to early September and we expect sales of around 9,500 for the year. The *Fun School* range has been going a while now and continues to be very popular.

2. Although it has been around for a good while now, *Mini Office* is still a good seller, at around 750 copies a month.

3. The highlight was undoubtedly *AMOS Professional*, which was reflected by the fact that it scored

Clash of the titans, Digita take on the might of Amiga Format and give them a sound thrashing at volleyball.

97% in ***Amiga Format*** earlier in the year.

4. It has been an excellent year for us on the Amiga and we had no problems with the format.

5. Plans for future developments have yet to be confirmed but we will let you know as soon as they are finalised.

AMOS may possibly be updated to support the new AGA chipset.

6. Our own feelings are that the market will stabilise and we very much hope to see the CD^{32} take off in a big way. We will be following this market very carefully.

Gold Disk
Keith Hughes

Gold Disk is in its tenth year and is the largest developer of serious software for the Amiga. It started with the C64 and moved over to the Amiga in 1986. Its first product was *Pagesetter* which developed into *Pro Page*, a landmark program. It was the first DTP program to offer four colour separation, way ahead of its rivals.

1. It's neck and neck between *Pagesetter 3* and *Video Director*.

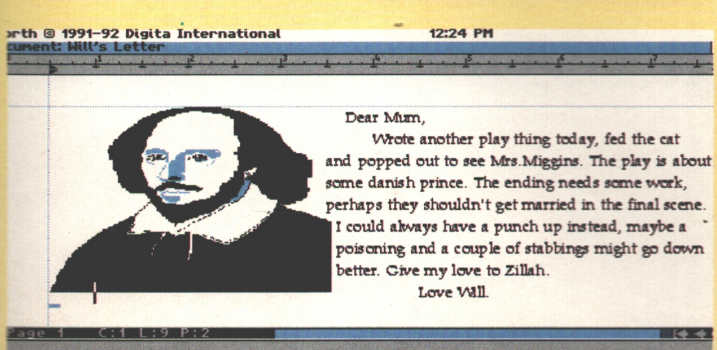
2. We anticipate *Video Director* to be our best seller next year.

3. Our move from Los Angeles to Silicon valley, it has made a very big difference indeed.

4. The slowing down of the Amiga market as our sales and continued commitment rely on the continuing growth of the installed user base.

5. We are looking forward to the release of *Video Director 2*. We see the Amiga as having two main areas of strength, home entertainment and video.

6. There is not a lot of original development going on, apart from companies like ourselves who have a historical commitment to the Amiga. There aren't new companies coming into the market and it's a problem for the Amiga. Technology is not the issue, the Amiga has always had superior technology. It's a combination of things, software developers need confidence in the format before developing for it and the focus for Commodore at the moment is in home entertainment. Our skills are in serious applications. We hope things will change, we have certainly seen a lot of ups and downs in the market and we will continue to support our customers. A lot of people here are very fanatical about the Amiga.



An undisputed star,* Wordworth *sets standards for word processing on the Amiga. The latest version has Compugraphic fonts scalable from 3 to over 800 points and extensive graphics support. It has also been updated to handle the new 256-colour mode.

Helios Software
Roger Wharmby

Helios must be unique in being completely Amiga-based, their programmers write all their programs with a language they wrote themselves. The business is run on Amigas and it even produces all the packaging on Amigas, right down to the colour separations for the boxes. Helios started life in 1987 and has two distinct markets, education and programming languages. It also produces a multimedia database. Initially its software was published by other companies but it now handles it all itself. These people are a group of real Amiga fans.

Designed by teachers to encourage creativity as well as learning,* Childsplay *from Helios is packed with all sorts of goodies for the inquiring mind.

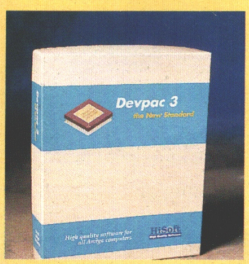
1. *Compendium 6*, an educational package of six separate programs. We are reasonably satisfied with sales.

2. We are looking forward to *Childsplay* doing well. It's a unique program, a sort of childs productivity package. There's a word processor, which can import pictures, create picture puzzles and cross-words. It's very versatile.

3 & 4. We haven't really had any highs or lows. We've had a good year of steady growth, people are getting to know us.

5. We are working on a children's art package and a game creation system. This is a special version of our programming language, Helios Forth, called *HeliOS*. It will enable people to create full professional quality arcade games. It's easy to

THE YEAR OF LIVING SERIOUSLY



Within this sedate box lies the most powerful programming language you can get for your Amiga. Like all of HiSoft's languages it is well supported, has excellent documentation and leaves most rivals floundering in its wake.

1993 AND AGA

The new AGA chipset in the new 32-bit Amigas has brought a rash of updates to all the major productivity packages. What is so exciting to the developers is the new graphics capability. It enables you to have up to 256 colours on screen from a palette of 16.7 million. There is also the amazing HAM-8 mode with more than a quarter of a million colours on screen. There are higher resolutions and more colours than ever before. You also get 2Mb of chip RAM, this is memory that can be accessed by the co-processors.

All this is a boon for graphics and DTP programs. No self-respecting serious application can hold its head up without AGA support.

use, yet offers machine code speeds. It'll be available February-March next year and we have high hopes for it.

6. The Amiga is probably going to enter a more specialist and computer enthusiast's market, a smaller but healthier market. The games consoles and PC's have encroached on the Amigas territory. It will always be popular for hobbyists and people who want to do something creative with their computer, not just play games. We are continuing to develop software solely for the Amiga and won't stop.

HiSoft David Link

HiSoft started out in 1979 producing languages for Z80 machines, by 1984 it moved over to the 68000 and proved itself a master at it. The HiSoft languages have gained a world-wide reputation for excellence and support, especially *Devpac* which has become the unofficial standard in Assemblers.

This year HiSoft branched out and took over AVR (Audio Visual Research) and Microdeal. AVR specialises in sampling and digitising hardware and the acquisition takes HiSoft into a whole new market. David is pleased with HiSoft's showing: "The Amiga market has done very well for us over the years, *Devpac* has sold phenomenally well and for audio-visual work the A1200 is a natural platform."

1. For the Amiga the best sellers have been *Stereo Master* and *Devpac 3*.

2. Next year we hope that *Megalosound* and *Videomaster A1200* will be the big sellers.

Megalosound is a direct to disk 8-bit sound sampler and the A1200 version of *Videomaster* produces excellent results with the AGA chipset. It's a lot faster too.

3. The highlight of the year was getting *Videomaster* to work on the A1200.

4. A difficult question, probably realising we still haven't released *HiSoft Basic 2* for the Amiga, too many things got in the way. We are still planning to release it.

5. We plan to enhance the range of audio-visual products, including a 16-bit direct to hard disk sampler and more high-end video products. Apart from the release of *HiSoft Basic 2* the languages are pretty stable, we will continue to upgrade them. We are looking at CD^{32} very carefully. We believe in the CD format, although we're not sure Commodore have got it right for general purpose use.

6. The forthcoming year will see a consolidation of the A1200 to form a solid user base. We will continue to strengthen our position with the languages but the main excitement is in the AVR products.

Impulse Larry Halvorson

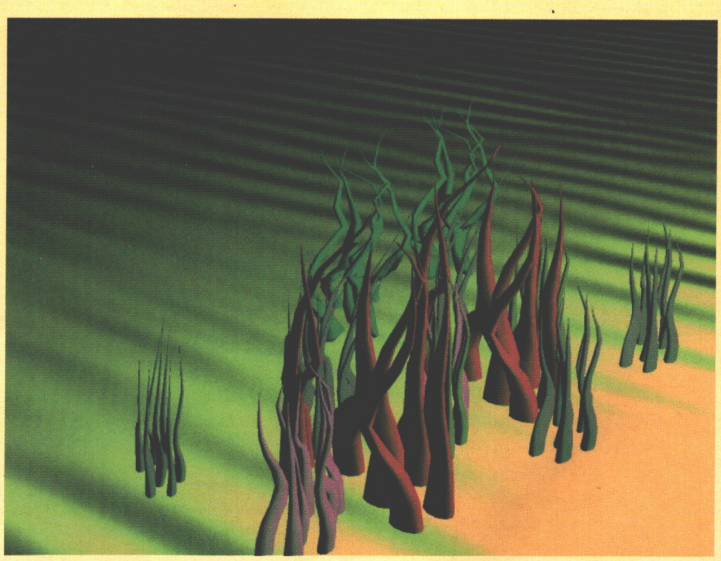
This Wisconsin-based company specialises in 3D modelling and rendering along with 24-bit graphics cards. Its claim to fame is *Imagine* which started life in 1987 as *Turbo Silver* and has steadily been upgraded over the years. It competes with *Real 3D* for the title of the best rendering package. The release of *Imagine 3.0* is eagerly awaited. Issue 53 of ***Amiga Format*** featured *Imagine* version 2 on it's Cover Disk.

1 & 2. We are very happy with the success of *Imagine*, it was voted the best 3D package two years running by *Amazing Amiga* magazine. Next year it will still be *Imagine*.

3. The success of *Imagine*.

4. I don't think there have really been any. The market has been good to us, the Amiga has been good to us. Nothing has been a 'worst moment'. We are different from most vendors, we don't rely on CBM or anyone else to make it work, we've been around a bit and have a large and loyal following.

5. November sees the release of *Imagine 3*. We are always working to improve *Imagine* and meet our



The kind of incredible pictures possible using* Imagine *from Impulse. The release of v.3 will put* Imagine *at the cutting edge of rendering technology.

TFX

"It's more than a straight flight sim:, D.I.D. have emulated multi-million dollar flight simulators. When you play TFX the first thing that hits you is the detail of the landscape... over seven million square km appears on screen, with hills, roads and mountains all in the right place." THE EDGE

"The graphic detail is quite superb, with stunning visuals and strong sense of image, TFX is quite often like watching a movie... when I first saw TFX my jaw dropped so far it took me 15 minutes to find it again! It's fast, good looking and fun." PC REVIEW

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THE YEAR OF LIVING SERIOUSLY

Life imitating maths or maths imitating life?
Vista Pro uses the weird science of fractal to generate incredibly realistic images of landscapes. You can play god in a world of your own creation.

customers wants and needs.

We are working on a Silicon Graphics machine version and a digital non-linear editing machine for videos and animations, which will be multi-platform.

6. The Amiga is not as strong in the US as in Europe and it's nothing to do with the developers, it's to do with Commodore. Our market hasn't changed and our users are loyal. I wish Commodore all the best and I think it'll do fine. We are planning to give the European market more attention.

INOVAtronics Tim Martin

Another American firm with some powerful serious software including *CanDo*, a multimedia authoring system. It is an established company that has concentrated on updating its two main products, *Directory Opus* and *CanDo*. The latter is an ideal piece of software for the interactive multimedia market, a profitable market to tap into.

1. *Directory Opus* has been very successful indeed.

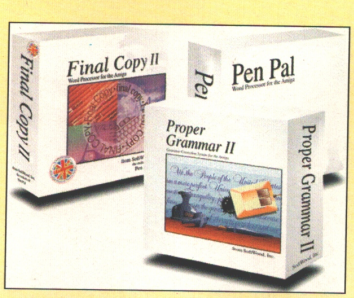
2. We hope that *CanDo 2.5* will be next year's big seller. We have a lot of users in the US but few in Europe, we're going to be pushing it hard in the UK and German markets especially.

3. A good highlight was ***Amiga Format*** giving *Directory Opus* the highest rating it has ever given, it's nice to hear you have a hot product. We also opened a UK office which is starting to find its feet.

4. Probably when Commodore posted huge losses, we don't like to see Commodore lose money. We don't like the way its not pushing the machine in the US.

5. We've got a new text editor called *Edge* that complements *Directory Opus* perfectly. We will continue to improve *CanDo* with more high end features. We've also got a project that I don't want to tell anybody about but which should do quite well. The new year will see INOVAtronics diversifying more. We plan to target corporate customers with solution orientated software based on A4000s.

6. We don't foresee Commodore going out of business. I've seen CD^{32} in action including FMV (Full Motion Video) and I definitely think it will do well. Commodore is very focused on making money at the moment. We are looking forward to CD^{32} bolstering Commodore's financial fortunes and leading to continued development at the higher end of the market. We are trying to refocus towards the higher-end, especially in the US.



The Softwood family shot, this UK-based company have shown firm support to the Amiga with an expanding and competent range of productivity software, it says here.

Oxxi-Aegis John Houston

An American company with an impressive range of serious software including 3D, animation and video applications as well as the acclaimed *SBase* spreadsheet. As with a lot of American companies you talk to there is a tendency to slip into market jargon. Since the Amiga never reached the mass market in the states the emphasis is turning towards using it as a platform for specific applications, something you can sell directly to corporations. More American developers are seeing this as a growth market for the Amiga, it undercuts the rival Macintosh and PC systems comfortably and it sounds as if Oxxi-Aegis plans to be there.

1. Our best selling title for 1993 is *SBase 4 Professional*.

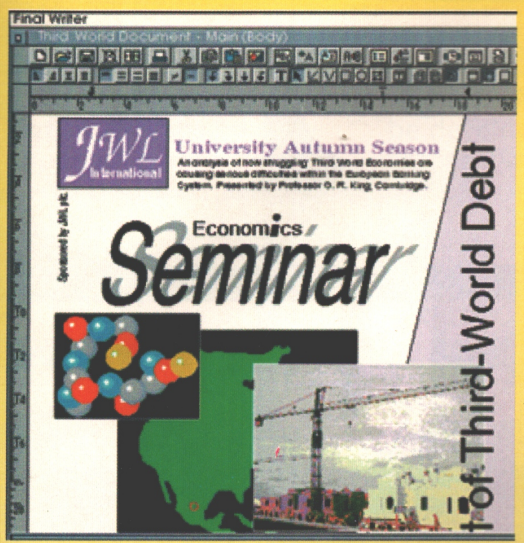
2. We hope that our best selling title for 1994 will be the new *VideoStage Pro*.

3. Our highlight for 1993 was shipping version 1.3 of *SBase 4 Professional* and *SBase 4 Personal*.

4. Our worst moment was when we heard Commodore US was having a struggle with its bankers, and potentially could have been thrown into bankruptcy.

5. For 1994 we are improving the *SBase 4* product line, strengthening our support for the AGA chipset with several of our products and further developing our new *VideoStage Pro*.

6. The Amiga market is becoming solutions orientated towards vertical markets such as video and kiosk on one hand, and on the other Commodore is also going strongly into the games market with its new CD^{32} machine. The growth of turnkey solutions has increased demand for networking products such as our *Amiga Client* software as well. Since our products are productivity orientated, our emphasis will be solutions for networking, video and kiosk markets. (*Phew, lots of market-speak there. What he means is*



The hot new Softwood program,* Final Writer. *Almost every function can be accessed from on-screen buttons. The look and feel is very classy.

people are using Amigas for specific uses rather than a generic computer. A turn-key solution is one you buy and use straight off and a kiosk is one of those rolling demos such as the ones you see while waiting in the queue at the Post Office.)

Softwood
Tony Bullock

Top marks go to Softwood for the most impressive answer to our fax, a beautifully produced colour PR pack, even if it did include lots of heavy plugs for its products. Softwood has carved a niche for itself in the production of powerful and easy to use word publishers.

1. *Final Copy II* has proved to be not just our best selling product this year but also the most popular Amiga word publisher.

2. We've just launched *Final Writer* which offers the same easy to use approach as our other programs with a host of new DTP-like functions. We hope it will match Final Copy's success.

3. Although it was launched quite some time ago, we are delighted at the way *Pen Pal*, our first Amiga specific product has retained its market share.

4. We have been very fortunate with the success of *Pen Pal* and *Final Copy* and haven't really experienced any low points this year. We were however forced to consider the ramifications to both ourselves and Amiga owners when we heard of Commodores financial situation earlier this year. Obviously we have considerable investment in forthcoming software and we would hope that Commodore now go from strength to strength.

5. In line with our commitment to developing quality Amiga software we are currently working on productivity titles that will take the Amiga user to a higher level of expectation. We believe the Amiga is here to stay and will continue to support it, we have products in the pipeline so watch this space.

6. Softwood have tremendous faith in the continuing success of the Amiga. As a producer of serious software it may sound strange that we think the CD^{32} is probably the best news for many years. It's obvious that Commodore had to take steps to combat the wave of games machines and so providing one that offers technical superiority over the competition at a better price is good news. The initial possibilities for our type of product are limited with CD^{32} but the benefits are yet to come. Many console owners regret buying a machine that can only play games, they are then faced with converting to a real computer for business and productivity uses. The CD^{32} however enables users to do both. Buy a games machine and when you're bored with it add a keyboard, hard drive, printer etc. and you end up with a real computer that will benefit from the wide range of serious Amiga software like ours. You won't have to throw away your console and start again! (If, or rather when, the CD^{32} cracks the mass-market then all the serious developers will be interested in a slice.)

Virtual Reality Labs
Susie Woeltjen

Virtual Reality Labs started life in1989 to provide for what it calls 'Amiga armchair space travellers'. Its most famous program, *Vista* came along in 1990 and impressed everyone with its stunning fractal landscapes, it has been in continual development since. Its other well known product is *Distant Suns*, an astrology program.

1. *Vista Pro* is easily our best seller on the Amiga.

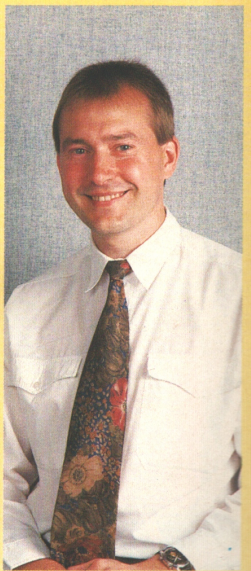
2. Probably our new product *Vista Pro Lite*. It runs on Amigas with 2Mb memory. A lot of people without wonderfully powerful Amigas weren't able to use Vista Pro.

3. Hard to say, improving *Vista Pro* probably. We are committed to continuing support for it.

4. Gosh, there were so many. Realising we weren't going to sell a million copies of *Distant Suns*! But seriously we were hoping it would do better than it did.

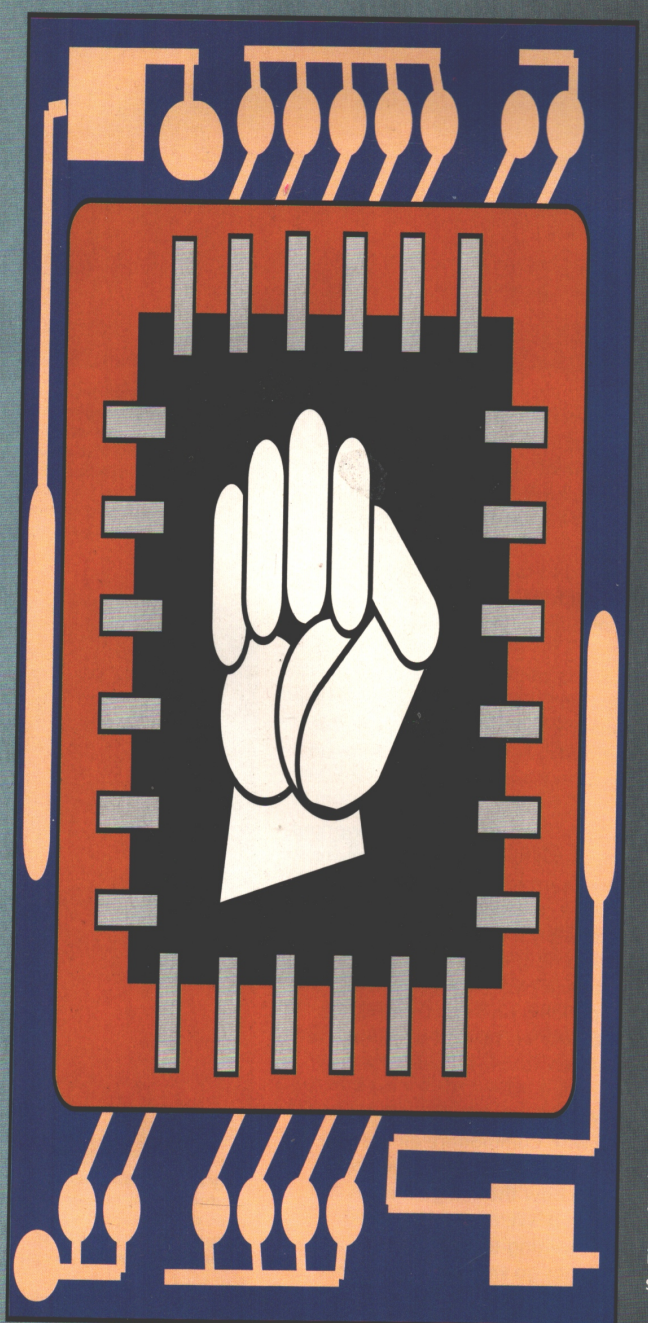
5. *Vista Pro Lite* is still being worked on, *Vista Pro* and *Distant Suns* are being ported to other platforms. We are considering releasing *Vista Morph* on the Amiga. This enables you to do smooth morphing between two *Vista* landscapes. Depending on how strong CD^{32} is and how the market develops, we will look into it software for it.

6. We've heard disparaging stories, we wish Commodore all the best in the forthcoming year. We don't know how the Amiga market will develop. We are in a hunched position waiting to see what happens. If things go well we will produce more for the Amiga.



Tony Bullock, Softwood's product development manager. Confident in the Amiga and the quality of Softwood products, he can also spot a good Public Relations opportunity when it comes along.

THE HARD STUFF



The peripherals manufacturers are the backbone of the industry. Chris Lloyd finds out how they feel about the Amiga past and present

The Amiga peripheral market has always been a buoyant one. One of the beauties of the Amiga is that you can add extras according to your requirements. The hardware market has changed considerably over the last year. The A1200 has taken over from the A500 as the cheap and expandable Amiga.

This has meant a change from expansion boards based around the A500's Zorro slot and trapdoor expansion to those based on the A1200's PCMCIA slot and 32-bit trapdoor slot.

A new wave of memory and accelerator boards for the A1200 have appeared, turning a fast machine into a very fast one. The first PCMCIA hard drive has arrived, as has a host of internal IDE drives.

The AGA chipset brought amazing graphics abilities and hardware soon appeared to back it up, including colour scanners and video digitisers to give full access to the new 256-colour and HAM-8 modes. The options for the A4000 are even more impressive with incredible 24-bit graphics and video cards turning it into a powerful graphics workstation. The A500 is far from dead of course, there are millions in service and the peripheral market is still very healthy.

The open architecture policy of Commodore has meant a thriving third party market. Anybody can develop for the Amiga and get access to the technical details they need. Amiga owners have proved thirsty for expansion, every new Amiga is rapidly used as a base for all sorts of expansion. The European market has the new 32-bit A1200 and the CD^{32} to act as a new base. The A1200 is beginning to receive good support. There are already keyboards being sold to use with CD^{32}, it won't be long before a lot more hardware becomes available.

THE QUESTIONS

We sent a healthy set of questions to the top hardware people and huddled around the fax machine waiting for the replies.

1. What are your company's best memories of 1993 for the Amiga?

2. What technical innovation would you most like to see coming from Commodore in 1994?

3. Which Amiga will you be developing or marketing hardware for in 1994?

4. What other machines are you developing for, and why?

5. How has the Amiga market responded in '93?

6. If you had one wish for the world of computing in 1994, what would it be?

7. What's the best Amiga product, aside from your own, that you've seen either on-sale or in development?

8. What's the worst?

9. Could you sum up your company's philosophy in one sentence?

10. If you had one wish for the world in general for 1994, what would it be?

1994 AND CD

The big one that everybody is waiting for is a CD drive to turn the A1200 into a CD^{32} compatible machine. Commodore is still working on it. It initially worked out too expensive. Ideally it needs to be a good few quid under the price of a CD^{32} machine in order to be attractive enough for big sales. The CD drive will fit into the trap door expansion slot. A through port would come in very handy indeed, so you can keep any existing expansion such as memory and accelerators plugged in too.

When the CD^{32} really takes off there will be a host of cracking good games that every Amiga owner will be dying to play. This will create the initial market for the format.

The possibilities for serious software coupled with the mass storage space of a CD will only be realised when the A1200 CD drive arrives.

ASDG

Dan Esenther

One of the first companies to get the Amiga into 24-bit graphics, the American company ASDG is at the cutting edge of Amiga graphics.

1. The best memory of '93 was that interfacing to the Exabyte tape drive in the Abekas format allowed Amiga graphics to be used on prime time television. *Quantum Leap*, *Babylon 5*, *SeaQuest* and *The Tommyknockers*, and in motion pictures in *Warlock 2*. *Babylon 5* won an Outstanding Special Effects Emmy award and *SeaQuest* would not have been made without our help.

2. Full 24-bit colour, MPEG in hardware (Motion Picture Experts Group, a chipset to decompress graphics), and Retargetable graphics.

3. We will market for models with Zorro 2 and Zorro 3 slots. We will continue to create hardware products as we see opportunities occur in support of our line of software products.

4. What other platforms are we developing for? None.

5. The Amiga market has been slow but steady.

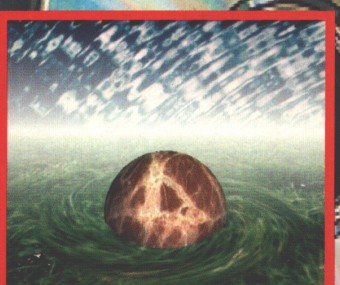
6. Any breakthrough in technology that creates whole new areas for computer hardware to interface with.

7. I am impressed with the DSP Personal Animation Recorder.

8. None come to mind.

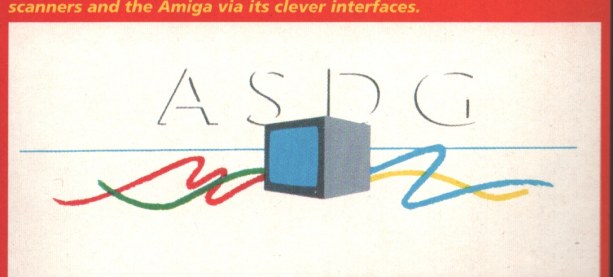
9. To create products that solve problems for our users, but to only ship the ones you can be proud of.

10. An end to civil wars and a reduction in world violence.



ASDG is better known for graphics programs such as Morphplus.

ASDG is the first company to enable an interface between 24-bit scanners and the Amiga via its clever interfaces.



THE HARD STUFF

The Alfa Data Scanner has full OCR combined with good scan response.

The AlfaColour Scanner distributed by Golden Image.

AMIGA CENTRE SCOTLAND

Martin Lowe

The Amiga Centre Scotland specialises in video and graphics hardware such as 24-bit graphics cards and digitisers. Its fax was brief and not completely serious in places. Like most distributers and developers it would like to see a really powerful high-end machine developed so that the Amiga can keep its place in the increasingly competitive market.

1. The highlight is that Commodore is still making computers!

2. We would love to see an Amiga with the power of the DEC Alpha chip. (The Alpha chip is an incredibly fast processor from DEC workstations.)

3. A1500, A2000, A3000 and A4000.

4. We have several other platforms under consideration at the moment.

5. The Amiga market response has generally been quite good.

6. It's already paradise on Earth.

7. The best Amiga product we've seen is the V-Lab video digitiser.

8. Products that are announced but never actually seem to arrive.

9. Quality products and service for the professional user.

10. A future.

GOLDEN IMAGE

Bahvim Shah

A distributer that also manufactures peripherals under licence, Golden Image is probably best known for a range of scanners.

The reply to our questions was short and sweet.

1. The highlight of 1993 for the Amiga has to be the launch of the Amiga A4000.

2. A 64-bit machine without finger print markings! (Apparently you can see finger prints in the plastic mouldings of the CD32!)

3. All of them.

4. We also handle peripherals for the Atari ST, Falcon, Macintosh and PC.

5. The Amiga market response has been very, very patchy.

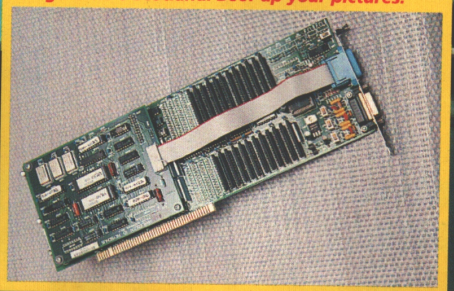
6.No comment.

7. The Gigamem virtual memory from Gastiener. (This enables your Amiga to use hard drive space as extra memory, meaning you can simulate huge memories.)

9. Customer compatibility.

10. To develop a product that is unique.

The amazing 24-bit Harlequin graphics from the Amiga Centre Scotland. Beef up your pictures.



GORDON HARWOOD COMPUTERS

Giles Harwood

A dedicated Amiga supporter with its own software label, Gordon Harwood Computers distributes a wide range of Amiga products. Its answers to our questions are the most comprehensive we received.

1. The way in which Commodore has consolidated its Amiga range. The A1200 has now become the clear winner as a low cost but very powerful home and small business computer. It's ability to be expanded with additional memory and hard disk drives etc., combined with its extremely reliable architecture have moved the Amiga a huge step forward. The A500 and A600 didn't offer any real performance increase over the original Amiga 1000, the A1200 genuinely does.

2. We would like to see Commodore extend their development of CD technology swiftly. We feel that a speedy introduction of an add-on CD drive for the A1200, along with an expansion chassis for the CD^{32},

Logic 3

...Bringing the best out of computing!

Commodore & Atari Controllers

Logipad

The world's first fully microswitched Control Pad

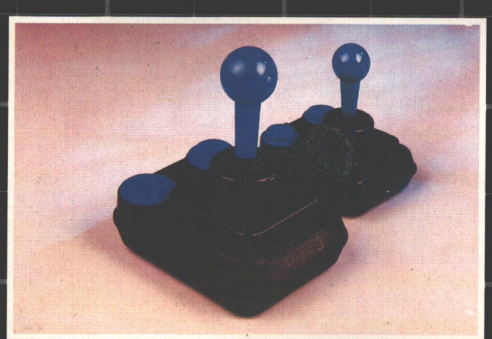
- Six fire buttons
- Eight-direction thumb control
- Autofire
- Six foot connector cable.

Model No. JT 160
£18.99 inc. VAT.

SpeedMouse

- Switchable mouse for both the Amiga and Atari ST
- Feather-touch button control
- 300 dpi
- Smooth and accurate movement
- Comfortable to use.

Model No. LG 2RG
£16.99 inc. VAT.



Quatro

Classic arcade-style design

- Six heavy-duty microswitches
- Two fire buttons
- Extra-long connector cable.
- Steel shaft

Model No. JT 154 **£12.99 inc. VAT.**

Pinto

Miniature version of Quatro.
Suitable for younger gamesplayers or hand-held play.

Model No. JT 151 **£12.99 inc. VAT.**

Quatro GT

Classic arcade-style design

- Six heavy-duty microswitches
- Extra-long connector cable
- Independent rapid-fire button
- 3-way autofire facility
- Slow-motion facility
- Two fire buttons
- Steel shaft.

Model No. JT 155 **£16.99 inc. VAT.**

Pinto GT

Miniature version of Quatro GT but without rapid-fire and slow-motion. Suitable for younger gamesplayers or hand-held play.

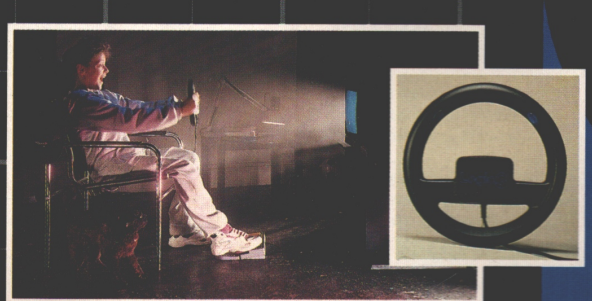
Model No. JT 152 **£16.99 inc. VAT.**

Delta-Ray

New 'Comfort-Grip' handle

- Nine high-quality microswitches
- Extra-long connector cable
- Five fire buttons
- Autofire plus rapid-fire function
- Suction cups for extra stability.

Model No. JT 156
£15.99 inc. VAT.



FreeWheel

Can you imagine Nigel Mansell using a joystick to control his car around a high-speed track? Probably not. That's why we came up with the FreeWheel. Just plug it into your computer joystick port and experience the real sensation of driving!

- Suitable for all types of driving and flying games
- Uses unique angle-sensitive switches
- Extra-long connector cable
- Does not need to be mounted or fixed to a surface.

Model No. FW 111 - Digital FreeWheel for Amiga/ST/C64 etc.
£29.99 inc. VAT.

Model No. FW 123 - Analog FreeWheel for Amiga **£39.99 inc. VAT.**

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ALL TRADE MARKS AND BRAND NAMES ARE ACKNOWLEDGED AS THE PROPERTY OF THEIR RESPECTIVE OWNERS.

LG4 07 10 93

THE HARD STUFF

GORDON HARWOOD COMPUTERS (Cont.)

would enhance the cross platform relationship of the two machine enormously. A choice of paths for Amiga users would only prove successful where a customer could choose whether to buy a games console expandable to a full-blown Amiga or an Amiga that could operate with the latest CD technology.

3. We will continue to support the Amiga marketplace. We are confident that both the A1200 and CD^{32} will flourish and we will distribute both Commodore and third party peripherals for each product. Existing additions to our range at prices users can afford will continue to be high on our list of priorities. These include the latest Blizzard memory expansion boards and the Fastlane SCSI boards for the A4000 that enable you to connect external SCSI devices, a range of specialist high quality multi-sync monitors, colour printers, PostScript laser printers, CD-ROM drives and removable hard drives.

The managing director of Gordon Harwood Computers, Giles Harwood. GHC is firmly behind the Amiga with a wide range of peripherals and its own software label, Softwood.

4. We have supplied Macintosh equipment for some time now and learned a great deal from our involvement with this system, which is now as affordable as the Amiga in some cases. Areas such as graphics and video work are becoming more widely used by everyone, not just the professionals. Similar applications are also available on the Amiga and our excellence enables us to give the best advice on the right equipment for each particular customer.

5. In the early part of 1993 the CBM marketplace was in a very confused state with A600s and A1200s vying for position at a similar price. Since then however, with the A1200 becoming established, sales have steadily improved. Since August '93 Amigas have been selling at a rate not seen since the late '80s when the Amiga boom began. We have also had a definite upturn of more serious product sales that have taken the Amiga into areas that were previously seen as strictly the domain of PCs and Macintoshes.

6. We would like to see a far more professional approach from companies involved in the Amiga market.

It is worrying when a firm springs up from nowhere offering the bargain of the century only to disappear just as quickly. The customer is left high and dry, with no after sales support and ambiguous warranties on equipment. We feel these companies, and there have been quite a few, tarnish the image of the industry as a whole and lead to a lack of confidence throughout.

7. A RISC based Commodore system in development that will run Amiga, PC and Macintosh software. If the unit is ever released, and we are told it may be in 1995, we feel that it will take the market by storm for users at the higher end who require a cross platform machine. It could be very exciting.

8. We certainly wouldn't knock any Amiga product, the majority are extremely good quality.

9. Our aims are simple, to provide our customers not just with truly competitive prices, but to maintain the level of service both at point of sale, and just as importantly afterwards too. Things you would normally associate with a high end systems provider.

We think we have gone a long way toward achieving our aim but we will constantly review our procedures in an effort to sustain and continue to improve the level of service we provide.

10. Without trying to sound too pretentious, just like most people we would love to see a more settled and peaceful world, and some of the political and economic turmoil evident in recent times, removed for good.

Perhaps some of the world's criteria for just what is important need to be reviewed.

The Blizzard Ram Expansion adds up to 8MB of memory to your A1200.

INDI DIRECT

Don Carter

A huge distributer of all things Amiga, Indi Direct supply everything from the machines themselves to 24-bit graphics cards, printers and software. It is part of a larger group that includes independent shops and is one of Commodore's official distributers.

1. The repricing of the A1200 and a massive increase in sales.

2. We would love to see a multi platform Amiga.

3. The Amiga A1200, A4000 and CD^{32}.

4. We also handle PC compatible peripherals.

5. Considering the recession, innovation has been continuing in the Amiga market, giving rise to great projects for the future.

6. A return to 1989.

7. The Full Motion Video module for the CD^{32}.

8. We would insult too many of our friends.

9. To remain first with Amiga technology.

10. Don't worry, be happy.

The M 1230 XA accelerator makes your A1200 tons faster. You can also have up to 8Mb of RAM added.

MICRO-PACE

Ben Vost

Micro-PACE has been going in the states for 11 years, the UK office was opened in March last year. It sells A4000s and distributes American and German hardware and serious software, priding itself on getting products before anybody else.

1. The best thing was seeing the A1200 dropping in price to £299 retail and the CD32 being launched.

2. I would like to see Re-targetable graphics (a standard for exchanging graphics between applications and platforms, much like SCSI is a standard for hard drives, it would mean you didn't need special software drivers to take advantage of graphics cards for example) and a true commitment to multimedia coming from Commodore.

3. We are going to continue support for the Amiga.

4. We aren't marketing anything for other machines because "only Amiga makes it possible".

5. Everybody seems quite depressed about the whole Amiga market. People to the left, right and centre of me are saying they are going to buy PCs instead, but Micro-PACE hasn't had a better year.

6. My wish for the world of computing in '94 would be, less of a 'my machine is better than yours' and more of the open systems approach with manufacturers looking at what the competition are doing and supporting each other. Roll on the Power PC based Amiga!

7. GVPs PhonePak. I only wish the software was better quality and that we distributed it.

8. Any graphics card that costs over £600 and has no discernible software support.

9. Micro-PACE's policy has always been: Product - Price - Service - Support.

10 My wish for 1994 would be for more honesty, honour and integrity in the world.

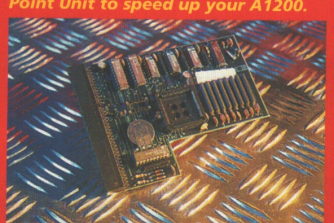
POWER COMPUTING

Mark Arnold

Power Computing has been around for eight years and most of the products it sells have been designed and manufactured by itself. It specialises in memory expansions and drives and has been very busy over the last year. The reply is detailed and puts a series of important points across.

1. 1993 has been a memorable but tough year for the computer industry, and in particular for Commodore and the Amiga. The highlight for us has to be our Power 1.76Mb XL disk drive, long overdue but worth the wait. One thing we have always firmly believed is that Commodore must supply its machines with a High Density drive in order to be taken more seriously in the business community. We can now supply external and internal high density drives for any Amiga. Something Commodore should have had long ago. The PC1204 was another technical innovation for us. A high quality and superbly specified memory expansion for the A1200. It has been a tremendous seller for us.

The PC1204 range of memory upgrades can include a Floating Point Unit to speed up your A1200.



2. I believe that Commodore must design, develop and release a new machine based on RISC (Reduced Instruction Set), technology which is windows NT compatible. I don't think Commodore can get away with releasing an upgraded Amiga again, an '060 A4000 won't cut it.

It needs something new, something that would be received in the same way as the Amiga 500 was when it was first released.

3. We are really pushing the Amiga and developing very hard for it.

Amongst the new products we will develo for 1994 will be replacement A600 internal disk drives, internal high density drives for all Amigas, a 2Mb chip RAM board for A500 and A1500s, a 16-bit sampler, a hand held colour scanner for A600 and A1200s and the PC1208 expandable memory board for the A1200. We will look into developing products for the CD^{32} after market analysis.

4. We are currently looking into the IBM compatible market although we don't have any firm plans at the moment. If we do develop for the machine it will not be until late '94. We may do a version of our Powerscanner, however we certainly won't be dropping the Amiga market.

5. The Amiga market has responded very poorly in our opinion. Commodore are guilty of not pushing the Amiga, it has no real sales promotions and I believe that rather than CBM creating new customers, many Amiga owners have simply upgraded. It is lucky that Commodore enjoys a loyal user base, sales of the A1200 and A4000

THE HARD STUFF

have been relatively good because of this.

6. For a magazine to stop asking awkward questions like this one. No seriously, to continue to advance and release new innovative barrier-breaking products. To stamp out the cowboys that slur and try to start to standardise things.

7. We think the best innovation and Amiga product is the video back-up system.

8. A completely useless product we were sent for evaluation, a mouse ball cleaner. A little fabric ball you placed into your mouse and somehow it was meant to dig out all the little hairs from the wheels, we never did work it out.

9. Our company philsophy is: 'In search of excellence'.

10. We would like Italy to win the World Cup.

The ICD Internal IDE Hard Drive plugs straight into the internal IDE interface of your A600 or A1200.

Power's XL 1.76Mb external drive provides what every Amiga should have as standard - High Density.

ROMBO

Stephen Bathgate

1. The most exciting thing to happen for Amiga in 1993 was the major push of the A1200. This represented a first class platform for the launch of our new Vidi Amiga (12) AGA. This has been one of the most successful products ever for Rombo and is now recognised as one of the most popular peripherals for the Amiga.

This was digitised with Rombo's excellent Vidi-Amiga.

2. I would like to see CBM develop a new interface box for their latest member, the CD^{32}. This should have the same connectors as the A1200, making it a more flexible and viable purchase for the creative user. It would then be easier for device manufacturers like ourselves to develop application peripherals around the machine. Hopefully resulting in a much broader user base and a stronger market presence,

3. All present and future Amigas.

4. We are currently developing product for four

Stephen Bathgate is the head honcho at Rombo.

platforms including; PC compatibles, Atari, Archimedes and, of course, Amiga.

5. For ourselves we have had the most incredible year with our Amiga products. This will only improve with the launch of our new Vidi Amiga range, which includes the long awaited Vidi Amiga (24) RT.

6. A DOS or IBM compatible Amiga, with true colour capabilities, aimed at the domestic market.

7. One of the products that has impressed me this year is the new generation Smart Card Hard Disk.

8. The worst experience by far this year has been Commodore's change of mind, i.e. A600 here today, gone tomorrow, or is it?

9. Our philosophy is quite simple, to make available products normally out of reach to the normal computer user, by offering hyper performance at a price he can afford!

10. Stop fighting!

The Vidi-Amiga-12 has full AGA chipset support giving you glorious 256 colour pictures and even more impressively can deal with HAM images.

SOFTWARE DEMON

Gordon A James

Software Demon is a relatively new and competitive hardware distributer. Gordon's answers broach the touchy subject of pricing, a perennial problem and one which David Pleasance has promised to address.

1. Our first sales and our first show, *Amiga Format* Live.

2. Working A1200s and an A1200 PC emulator.

3. We will be marketing hardware and software for the whole Amiga range including the Amiga CD^{32}.

4. We also deal with PC compatibles, they never break down even if you build them from modules on site.

5. As far as we are concerned the market has responded very well, however we haven't got records to show how it responded last year!

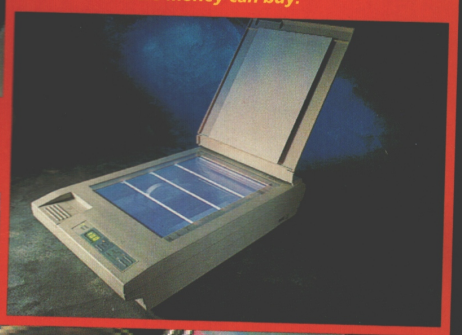
6. We would like Indi Direct to sell things at the recommended retail price.

7. *Real 3D* and *XCopy*.

8. I don't like to upset people.

9. We try our best to provide the best.

10. Trees, we definitely need more trees.



The Epson GT6500 24-bit flat-bed scanner is one of the best scanners money can buy.

The A570 CD Drive for the A500 is a bargain at a mere £99. Mass storage for meagre money.

The GVP range from Silica includes hard drives, accelerators, gen-locks, 24-bit graphic cards and sound samplers

SILICA SYSTEMS

Andy Leaning

One of the big boys, Silica distribute all sorts of software and hardware. The answers are straight to the point.

1. Seeing the Amitek Hawk A1200 RAM Accelerator become our best selling Amiga product was probably the best moment of '93. We took a long time developing it and seeing it do so well, so quickly, was very gratifying.

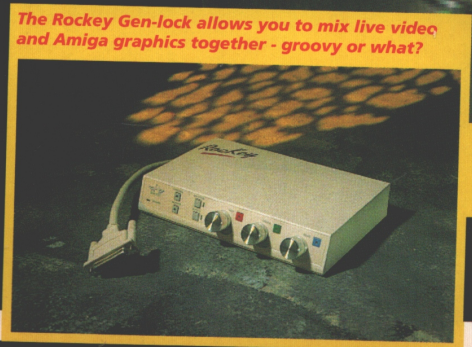
3. We are developing products for the A1200, A600 and A500.

5. For Amitek as a small dedicated Amiga developer, the Amiga market has responded well to our commitment to it, for us.
1993 was a great year.

6. That the Amiga became the standard computer replacing PCs. Given its better specification and price it should be this way!

7. The new version of GVP's A1230 accelerator. The expansion port on this board is very exciting and opens up possibilities for further peripherals. We are already looking into releasing cards for it.

9. To provide solid, reliable Amiga peripherals and upgrades at a competitive price.



The Rockey Gen-lock allows you to mix live video and Amiga graphics together - groovy or what?

AMIGA CD32 MACHINE FOR THE FUTURE?

The Amiga CD32 is the most talked about machine of the last year. We asked Stuart Dinsey, editor of Computer Trade Weekly, to put the speculation into perspective

Perhaps more than any other games machine launched into the UK, the CD32 has real heart-felt support. People want it to succeed. Okay, so Commodore's current and prospective hardware rivals might disagree, but the new flagship caused a real stir when the wraps came off towards the end of the summer.

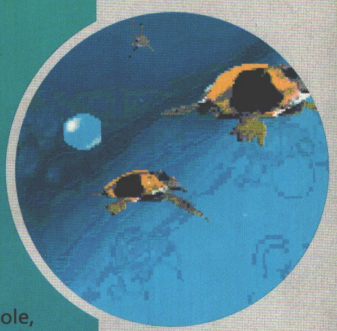
Everybody was delighted with the new arrival.

At last, a real multimedia offering to blow away the memories of the CDTV debacle. At last, an out-and-out games system from a company that has so often run down blind alleys because of its US bosses' belief that Commodore is a `real' computer company. At last, some competition for the Sega/Nintendo console duopoly. At last, an all-in-one high spec CD games unit.

Sounds great. But it's easy to want something to do well. It's easy to say 'yes that sounds like a great machine', it's easy for us here at ***Amiga Format*** *Special* to swoon at the technical specs and write four pages on why CD32 is going to beat all-comers.

The hard bit is doing it. And boy is Commodore's job hard.

It has stepped back into the CD war-zone bruised, but thankfully not too bloodied, from its ill-fated CDTV attack. It is still fairly early in terms of the overall development of the much-hyped '90s phenomenon



(Left and Below) Creation is a game being developed by Bullfrog for the CD32. It will have a very unusual feel for a game because it is based underwater. You'll learn to swim with the fishes.

(Above) One of the beautiful tables from Pinball Fantasies, one of the first games available on the CD32.

(Right) The CD32 version of Syndicate, with enhanced sounds, should be available in the very near future.

of CD-based interactive entertainment. But things are a lot more crowded than when 'Commodore Dynamic Total Vision' (yes, that's what CDTV stands for) was launched for the first of countless unimpressive times at Las Vegas CES in January 1991.

Commodore still has CD-i to deal with, though any claims by Philips that it 'beat' CDTV would be laughable considering the number of sales required (and achieved) for that victory.

Then there's Sega's Mega CD, with its flashy ads and largely average software. But it's out there and it's sold 70,000 units in the UK – that's more than either CDTV, CD-i or PC CD-ROM drives have managed in the past three years. The games are getting better, they're from big names, and Sega has admitted that it's only a bridge machine to a real 32-bit CD system for next year.

Coming up on the rails are PCs with CD drives (and bags of software), the long awaited 3DO CD machine which should be here by spring at the latest, and – get this – Atari's new Jaguar console, with 64-bit technology and bold claims that it can do everything a CD machine can, even without the planned bolt-on CD drive.

Add to that the significant point that Commodore has cut down its operation and has lost enough cash in the past year to rebuild an Eastern European economy, and you should begin to be getting the full picture.

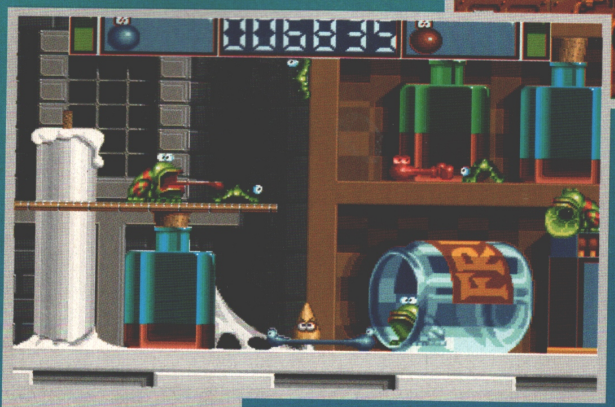
Yes, the Amiga is a very strong machine in the UK. Barring disasters, it should have completed another cracking year on the computer side come January – with around 250,000 A1200s and A600s having been sold.

Commodore's plan is that this figure will be sitting on the firm's 1993 UK accounts next to 180,000 CD32s – a springboard into 1994, when Johnny Punter finally gets his head around the multimedia buzz-words and ditches floppies and carts for the vinyl killer supreme – Compact Discs.

Talking to Commodore's UK boss David Pleasance, it sounds like

AMIGA CD32

The CD32 release of **The Chaos Engine** *will be the same excellent game but heavily updated with extra 256-colour graphics and lots and lots of new sounds.*



Following up from one of the two big, colourful arcade-style games of last Christmas (the other one was **Zool**, **Putty 2** *should be a bit of a giggle on the CD32.*

lic are gagging for it, the trade are happy, the TV ads start from the end of October. It's all systems go. Competition? That's even more good news.

"I want Sega to spend millions telling people about CD as a games platform. It will drive people into stores to look at CD, then we'll get the business. The difference in product quality is so incredible I can't see anyone trying both and then buying a Mega CD."

After its half-cocked CDTV efforts, Commodore claims to be really spoiling for a fight this time around. The marketing spend (including TV and all manner of other marketing chicanery such as 'below the line' activity) is put at £7 million. Software wise, Commodore says there will be over 40 titles by the turn of the year. Price wise, at £299 the CD32 is cheaper than the £399 CD-i, £369 Mega Drive with Mega CD pack, and all the £1,000 PC CD offerings.

And it could have been better. Currency pressures and, presumably, a poke in the ribs from those hurt by Commodore's enormous US losses meant that the initial target of £199 (a secret up there with Brian Clough's love of a late night tipple) couldn't be met.

On Friday 16 July, with a rumble of drums, a cloud of dry ice and a spurt from bought-in celeb Chris Evans' mini-Super Soaker, the CD32 was officially launched – complete with £299 price-tag. Commodore said 'this is an incredible machine for the price'. The trade said 'what happened to £199?'.

"I'm annoyed with this thing about pricing. Kelly [Sumner, the previous CBM UK boss] went around telling everybody it would be £199, and now it's as if £299 isn't a good price. I'm telling you, £299 is excellent value. You can't buy anything anywhere near this for such a low price," says Pleasance.

Commodore can at least count itself lucky that the strength of the yen has stopped Sega from being able to reduce the price of the Mega CD II as planned.

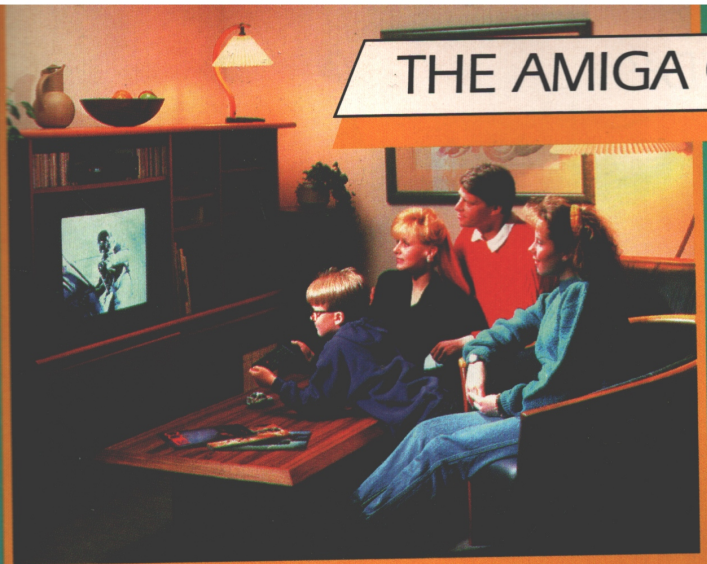
It's also lucky that Philips took so long to discover the worth of confidence is running high, even if the initial launch of the machine seemed cautious, to say the least.

At the beginning of September, 1,500 units went out to specialist computer shops, 1,000 to Comet and another 300 to the Future Zone games chain. Add that to 800 demo models in Rumbelows (some of which were sold with no warranty card or software!) and you have CD32 Batch 1 – 3,600 machines.

Yes, distribution has increased now, and many more machines are no doubt both on shelves and safely installed in bedrooms up and down the land. But 3,600? Nervousness from Commodore? Cash constraints on how many can be built?

Not so, says Pleasance. The pub-

The special edition of Team 17's wonderful **Bodyblows** *should soon appear on the CD32, giving* **Street Fighter 2** *a good kicking in the process.*



Funny how the times change. A few years back this was the advertising concept for the 'CD Family'. Nowadays it's all mania and pirates.

MEMORIES OF THE CDTV

The CDTV can be viewed in either of two ways – a disaster, or a stepping stone. In terms of technology, it helped in the development of the clearly superior CD32. In terms of marketing, it just didn't work.

The software available was in the most part poor and there simply wasn't enough of it. The controller was horrible, the machine had the design appeal of, well, a big black rectangular box, and it had more launches than the QE2.

But without CDTV, would Commodore have ever been able to have this latest tilt at the console world?

decent games software, that Nintendo is still two years away from launching a CD machine, that the first 3DO machines will cost £500 at least and that Amiga owners are very, very loyal.

But if you've already got an A1200, a cracking machine without doubt, are you really going to go out and buy ostensibly the same machine – with some CD benefits, for sure – at £299 a throw?

Commodore must ultimately rely on a more sophisticated breed of video games player for success with CD32. A gamesplayer who sees the best games arriving on CD32, a real benefit from and early introduction of the £200 Video CD add-on, and a machine that isn't going to be squeezed out of contention by the cash-rich likes of Nintendo, Sega, Philips, Sony and the new 3DO.

Commodore pulled off a major success with the Amiga 500 and its descendants. This time the rewards are much, much greater – but so is the competition.

THE CD HARDWARE RIVALS... SEGA

Nick Alexander is no stranger to fending off new machines on behalf of his beloved Sega.

He launched the Master System into the UK back in 1987, when the Amiga was making its name across Europe as the best home computer ever, and Nintendo was teaching the US to fall in love with video games all over again.

Sega had no brand name and a very average piece of 8-bit kit, but some excellent marketing and some big name arcade titles helped it forge its way into the hearts and minds of British retailers and, more importantly, consumers alike.

Nintendo was supposed to come in with the NES and wipe Sega out, like it had done in the US and Japan already, but that never quite happened here. The Amiga was a better machine all-round, but the Master System played to its strengths and won the game.

In 1989, the Mega Drive arrived – sending the video games sector soaring in this country – but again it was supposed to be rolled over once Nintendo started firing on its SNES cylinders.

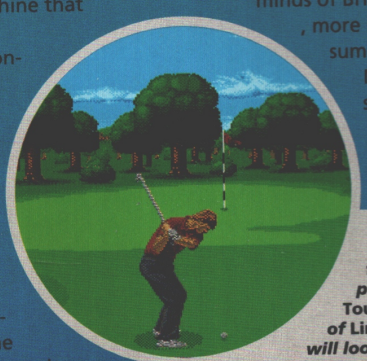
By the beginning of this year, the Mega Drive had completed a convincing victory over the SNES – selling over a million units against Nintendo's estimated 600-700,000. With over 1.5 million sold since launch, the Mega Drive is without doubt the most popular dedicated games machine in the UK.

Earlier this year, on the back of the costly, interminable (but apparently effective) 'pirate TV' marketing campaign, the Mega CD arrived. Sega's next step towards the door marked 'interactive movies' had been taken.

Its battle with Nintendo on many fronts goes on, but with Nintendo dragging its feet in the race towards popular CD, its biggest immediate test here in the UK is coming from Commodore.

The Mega CD arrived in April, with a first shipment of some 70,000 units being dished out. Actual sell-through at retail, however, was a little slower than anticipated during the following months – those in the know blaming lack of software and, most crucially, lack of software that was either better than current Mega Drive cartridge fare or, in some cases, any good full stop.

Sega is preparing to step up its Mega CD push with an autumn/winter marketing blitz – and generally sees the machine as



Scoring highly in its disk version for combining the playability of PGA Tour with the looks of Links, Nick Faldo will look even better on the Amiga CD32.

Team 17 is fully behind the CD32 and this fun platformer, Superfrog, is yet another of its many CD32 projects.

Oscar is one of the games that comes included in the CD32 pack.

AMIGA CD32

There are great hopes for Psygnosis' second CD32 production, Dracula. This is the licence of the Coppola film version and promises great gameplay.

Taking up where Epic left off and hopefully going a good deal further, Inferno is one of two efforts from D.I.D. that add a fun scenario to 3D realism.

the perfect bridge for a new all-in-one CD unit due to arrive in autumn 1994.

But it now has Amiga CD32 to think about – the only other CD format out there from a firm with a games pedigree.

Is Nick Alexander, Sega's long-time European boss, worried about this rival system – a machine Commodore reckons could have sold 180,000 units by January?

Er, it certainly wouldn't seem so at the moment.

He recently went along to the public 'unveiling' of the machine at a large London exhibition and claims to have been massively disappointed by the games on show.

He offers the classic new product put-down that CD32 is "all sizzle and no sausage".

"There's no doubt that the technical specification is fantastic, but it's all down to what you can deliver," says Alexander. "I've heard all this talk of the machine being 'FMV-ready', everything will arrive in 'just a few weeks time'. I don't think there's anything to get excited about at the moment.

"The games I've seen so far are just old Amiga games converted, or slightly updated versions. Publishers and developers aren't going to spend serious money on something until they've seen evidence of it actually doing what the manufacturer says it will.

"The FMV cartridge isn't here, and it's going to be £200 when it does arrive – I really think that could be the death knell. FMV is very important, and something that our new machine will have. If it was available for the CD32 I would be worried about it."

Commodore's financial position, while apparently steadier these days than a few months back, gives Sega an extra comfort factor. Says Alexander: "If they were in better financial shape then that would make a real difference. I just think that obviously times have been tough and it's going to be very hard for them to make a really successful entry into this emerging end of the games market."

PHILIPS

The original CD Wars script ran: 'Enter Commodore and Philips with the UK's first ever multimedia home entertainment systems – battle ensues, with intriguing ebb and flow, technology gets pushed to the limits, and Johnny Punter emerges the real victor'

That never quite happened, Commodore never got the hang of its flawed weaponry, while Philips made the rather embarrassing mistake of marching into completely the wrong battlefield.

Philips was cheered on by its partisan supporters into the world of VCRs and electric kettles , and its encyclopaedias went down great with, well, er, nobody in particular.

If only Philips had realised that it needed to be in computer shops, that it needed software, not guitar playing guides. That it needed interactivity, not 'real video footage' of bad actors (making even the technically-impressive titles boring).

A year or two on from the arrival of CD-i on the High Street, and Philips seems to have learned its lesson. Decent games software has been licensed in from the likes of Psygnosis, Gremlin and Rage –

Alfred Chicken *is not an MP. But he is a star of the Amiga CD32.*

MEMORIES OF THE CDTV

The CDTV was launched by Commodore as a 'brown' good, akin with kettles, hi-fi and televisions. According to UK boss David Pleasance this strategy was arrived at via a very costly research company. Their number one conclusion was that Commodore must never refer to the product as a computer, or use the Amiga brand name.

The 'Amiga CDTV' name eventually arrived due to a poster campaign in Germany, which was received well. Sales actually started rising – people started working out that the machine was an Amiga with CD drive.

Such a fine line...

Dave Lee Travis, as host of* The Golden Oldie Picture Show, *could hardly have chosen a more appropriate product to be associated with.

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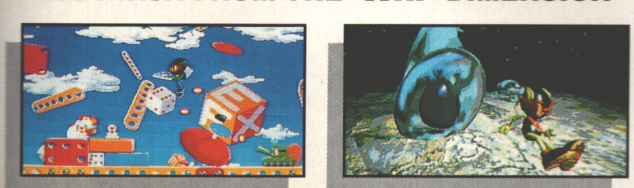

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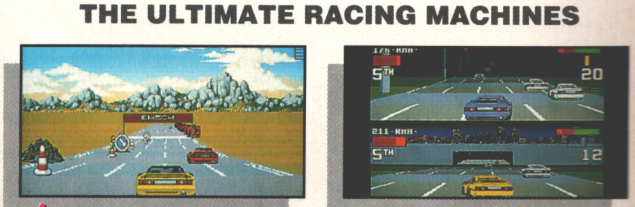

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